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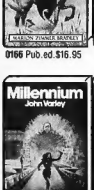

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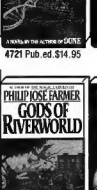

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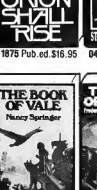

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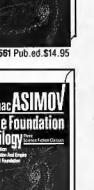

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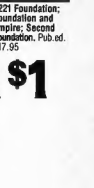

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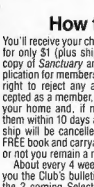

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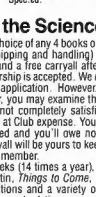

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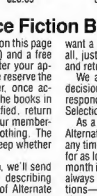

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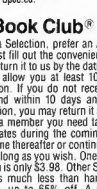

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DOSSIER

Brian Grant: "Donna, are you listening?"

Photo by Neal Preston

TELLYGRANT

Typical sixties conversation:
First Person: I'm bored.
Second Person: Let's make a candle.
Typical seventies conversation:
First Person: I'm bored.
Second Person: Let's start a band.
Typical eighties conversation:
First Person: I'm bored.
Second Person: Let's make a rock video.

Dilletantism has taken myriad forms throughout the (rock of) ages—but, for now, rock video seems *the* culture bandwagon to climb on. The making of them is the perfect post-punk neo-conservative's dream profession—not too hip, not too straight. Lucrative, attention-getting, glamorous. Can't you just fantasize it? Video directors get free drugs, hang out with rock stars, get the rock stars' leftover girlfriends, get to be artistic. And, best of all, it's easy.

The last may be the only real misconception. Most rock vids aren't worth the tape stock they're edited on to, and are the cultural equivalent of cupcakes. Of course, there's virtually no precedent, stylistically or visually, for music videos, but that ought to leave them open to wild flights of imagination. Yet, in most cases, directors have and are resorting to clichés that became clichés nearly overnight: *West Side Story* dance numbers, smoke bombs, leather, chains, tits, ass, Duran Duran.

But there's another school of video directing that eschews "promos" in favor of "short films." It's made up of (primarily English) guys who started making rock videos long before MTV was even a gleam in Warner-Amex's eye—back in the middle-ish seventies. Out of that group of experimenters came what are now two international production companies: Limelight, with a roster of such directors as Steve Barron (Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean"), Don Letts (all the Clash videos), and Julian Temple (The Kinks' "Come Dancing" and ABC's "Poison Arrow"); and MGMM, which features the now-reknowned Russell Mulcahy (Duran Duran clips), David Mallet (Bowie's, Def Leppard's, and Joan Jett's clips), and **Brian Grant**. Outside of Temple and eccentric English musicians-gone-vid-directors Godley and Creme (Herbie Hancock's "Rockit" and the Police's "Every Breath"), Grant has made some of the most successful and oft-watched music videos: **Donna Summer's "She Works Hard for the Money," ABC's "Look of Love," Olivia Newton-John's "Physical,"** and, probably the best rock video ever, **Peter Gabriel's "Shock the Monkey"** (and, not coincidentally, recipient of *HM*'s Best Video of the Year award last year—see the September 1983 issue).

Grant is no flash in the proverbial pan. He'd had eleven years as a cameraman under his belt before he made his first rock vid (**M's "Pop Muzik"**), and all his videos since have had the magical ingredients of "repeatability": humor, irony, excitement, narrative, character, and great visuals which work in context with the song. His videos tend to open up a song's meaning ("Shock the Monkey" being the best example), not limit or inhibit it, like most vids.

—Merle Ginsberg

HM: Brian, why do you make these bloody things?

BG: It was a choice of staying in the prison of conventional camerawork, or doing these. I love music, I love film—and this is the marriage of the two. It was a natural progression for me. Problem is, now I'm married to *both* of them. What a commitment—a hundred percent to both!

HM: Does the selling part of rock videos—the "promo" in the "promo clip"—inhibit the creativity of it?

BG: Well, I suppose anybody who's ever painted a painting wanted to sell it. It's a marketing tool, you can't escape that. You have to give the record company what they need, and you have to give yourself a film you're happy with. One can justify the other, or get in the way of the other. In some cases, it is blatant selling. There's a lot of stuff on MTV that's crap.

HM: And speaking of MTV, what do you think of it? Isn't it great for you personally?

BG: It's great in some ways, and amusing in others. Us old limeys have been doing this for four or five years. You come to America and see it . . . well, it's great. But the American directors are going through the same process we went through three years ago. Experimenting. You see videos on MTV that have everything and the kitchen sink in them, and you have to laugh. Music video has become a kind of "me, too!" place—everybody says, "Oh that looks fun. I think *I'll* do one of those." But there's an awful lot of mimicking going on. The best people are the ones who just make their own films.

HM: Do you think videos are capable of having built-in "repeatability" the way hit records do?

BG: A lot of people say the only way to do that is to make a video no one understands. And they say I do that a lot, particularly with "Shock the Monkey." But that factor of mystery only works in a format like MTV, where videos are in rotation. Basically, with video it's the same as film—if it's really *good*, really well made, you can watch it ad infinitum.

HM: How does one make a video like that?

BG: I don't know. (Laughs.) There's no formula for success in this. I think formula guarantees you won't have success.

HM: How would you describe your stylistic techniques? Are you literal with a song? Figurative?

BG: Certainly not literal. It's nice to tell a story. It's also nice to tell a story that confuses people; I don't mean to throw a pile of images at them, and that those images don't have to mean something. There always has to be a thread, maybe not quite so obvious or logical—"Shock the Monkey" has a thread that perplexes people.

HM: I'd say it has *lots* of threads.

BG: A lot of people say it doesn't matter as long as a video looks good. I don't agree at all. People have to be captivated by it, and have to be able to work things out for themselves.

HM: Do you believe in cutting to the beat—do you try and make the video as musical as the song?

BG: It depends on the action. There are times when you should cut rigidly, and there are times when you shouldn't cut at all. You have to go with what feels right.

HM: Do you storyboard your videos in advance? Do things change in the edit?

BG: Oh yeah, things change endlessly, until you're done. The storyboard is not a bible, it's just a guide. It allows the producer to work better, and it allows me to find the weak bits in a video before we start shooting. But things change on the set—there's the extreme of a prop not turning up, or, God forbid, and it *has* happened, of a *star*

not turning up.

HM: Who was that?

BG: I can't tell you—all I can say is that I improvised a fucking lot. The storyboard got ripped up, and I just started winging it, there and then.

HM: Some people are under the impression that with rock videos everything happens in the edit.

BG: A lot happens in the edit, especially if you've got a good editor. But you can't go into an edit with a pile of shit. No, that's not true—you *can* go into an edit with a pile of shit, but you got to have shot *something*. I try and approach it the way filmmakers do—they rely on good scripts. There are pop videos, and there are little films.

HM: I notice that you've never used any fancy computer techniques or effects in your tapes.

BG: No, I don't like them. They're tools, and people rely on them when they can't think of something better. The key elements are on the pages. I refuse to use effects somebody else invented. I say: rely on your head. Forget the Japanese.

HM: A lot of people, *HM* included, think "Shock the Monkey" is about the best video ever. Why is that, do you think?

BG: It's the best one that I've ever done that married the song with the pictures—even though the song *isn't* actually about what the pictures are about, but it works. I'm not quite sure why, but it does.

HM: There are so many shots in that video.

BG: Yeah, it was one of those ideas that just grew and grew. I had a lot of pre-production time on it, and I storyboarded every single shot.

HM: You seem to have a lot of "visual ideas."

BG: I guess. I don't know where they come from. They drip or they gush.

Paul Young checking his glands.

Photo by Eric Watson

Grant: "A lot of people say it doesn't matter as long as a video looks good. I don't agree at all. People have to be captivated by it, and have to be able to work things out for themselves."

HM: You do very well with humor. Like with the "Physical" video—putting Olivia in a gym with a bunch of fat guys! It was the last thing one expected for that song.

BG: Well, when I heard the lyrics, I knew if we were literal, we'd wind up with something pornographic, and we'd be fucked cause no one would play it. Humor's the hardest thing to pull off in three minutes.

HM: Do you want to stay with rock videos?

BG: I intend to keep making them, but I'm about to start shooting my first feature film, and that's what I've always wanted to do.

HM: Is it a music film?

HM: Thank God, no. Features are nothing like pop promos. Look at *Flashdance*—that's an extended promo. "*Trashdance*" I call it. You've got to have time to tell a story properly. I'm not just into visuals. I want to tell a story.

Grant making Summer work hard for her money.

Photo by Neal Preston

SOULFULL OF IT

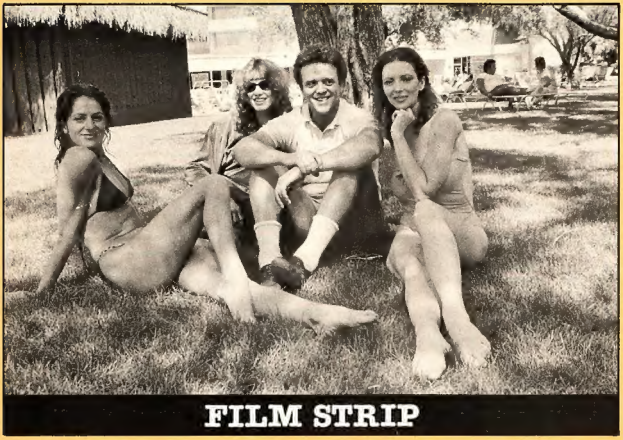
Although **Boy George's Culture Club** and **Spandau Ballet** have proven that any idiot with a steady diet of American dance music and a measured beat can come up with a fair approximation of what America wants to hear, it takes more than a couple of hits to make a legit artist. Spandau look hip-trendy and dress English-modern so they can get away with sounding like the Association - meets - Harper's - Bazaar while still appealing to the twerps who buy anything English and (preferably) white. Pat Boone's righteous successors, they manage to corrupt the WBLS sound in a way so innocuously MOR that Kajagoogoo seem ethnic by comparison—yet radio readily accepts them because they can slip by under Duran Duran's ratings sweep. Culture Club are disguised even more heavily, but if Boy George didn't look the way he does people might think he was Kenny Loggins or the Doobie Brothers. Or maybe even Peter Allen. Their music isn't objectionable or in any way consonant with their image—it's just more MOR, perhaps based in American soul music, but again so washed over that it sounds more like what was on the radio during the height of Michael McDonald Mania than Motown's golden age. Any day now, they'll be doing "This Is It" or "What a Fool Believes" for encores, joined onstage by Rod Stewart or Jim Messina. As for George's phenom image, it's obvious that this is just another pose without explanation—interviews reveal him as just another hollow narcissist. One is tempted to dismiss any British soul as just new hype from the same Lobsterbacks who brought you glam, Stiff Records, and David Essex.

Then along comes an album called ***No Parlez*** (Columbia) by **Paul Young**—a twenty-seven-year-old who looks like nothing special, but has a set of vocal pipes the likes of which you haven't heard in practically a decade. And the guy has taste: he can segue from Joy Division's "Love Will Tear Us Apart" (completely revamping the melody) into Marvin Gaye's "Wherever I Lay My Hat" and make complete musical sense. He picks a semi-obscure Waylon Jennings tune ("Love of the Common People") and injects the lyrics with such soul and passion that you don't recognize it as country and western. And a rather obvious Booker T. throwaway, "Iron Out the Rough Spots," is turned inside-out to where the compelling vocal *becomes* the song. It's really hard to tell if there are any bad songs on the album because this guy can sell *any* tune. His arrangements—drum machine and synth based, but hardly typical—are consistently inventive and have a sound all their own, buoyed by Pino Palladino's loping bass and the sparky backing vocals of the Wealthy Tarts (Kim Lesley and Maz Roberts). Not to mention Ian Kewley's synths (he being a former member of Young's previous outfit, the Q-Tips)—there isn't a soul on this record who doesn't belong. The album is unique, inspired, original, and unpredictable, without resorting to any of the standards and practices you might expect from your basic English synth-pop ersatz-soul production. This geezer lends the kind of credibility to the genre that Boy George, Duran Duran, Spandex Billet, and the rest of the would-be-pretenders-to-the-throne almost destroy. Maybe a little Dippity-Do in his hair would sell him to American audiences.

—Jon & Sally Tiven

Ed Lachman and assistant Mitch Dubin (left) shooting Danyel: Gypsy Rose Lee meets *Carrie*.
Photo by Mark Shaw

Strippers Tarren Rae, Danyel, and Janette Boyd with director Jerome Gary.
Photo by Mark Shaw



FILM STRIP

"I'm trying to present the reality of something that is by its nature fantastical. Having lived with a stripper, I am in love with all of them."

Stripping, like bodybuilding, is an existential act. It's a reaction against the absurdity of life and an attempt to transform pain (in the case of bodybuilding, physical; in stripping, psychic) into gain. It's also, like bodybuilding, a celebration of the carnal self; and the best strippers, like the best bodybuilders, take the physical self and transform it into something —well—superhuman. It is perhaps these multiple connections that prompted filmmaker **Jerome Gary**, the producer of ***Pumping Iron***, to turn his documentary lens on to the women who take their clothes off for a living.

What Gary found was that there are as many misconceptions about strippers as there are about muscle men. He also found that strippers are among the most riveting performers in the world, trading as they do in a commodity that has fascinated men for ages: the naked female form.

Not to say that getting naked is the single object of stripping. Strippers deal in illusion, and their performances combine dance, music, costume, and make-up. The result is alchemical: they are transfigured. As one of ***Stripper***'s principals puts it, "We're all goddesses when we're up there."

Goddesses they may be, but one of the things Gary wanted to find out was: Who are they when they're off-stage? Are they ordinary women? Or are they emotionally disturbed victims? Are they whores and exhibitionists? Or are they "good girls" making a living at what they do best? What Gary found is that all of the above is true.

Together with his team of filmmakers, producer-turned-director Jerome Gary took his Aaton cameras to Las Vegas's Sahara Hotel last summer, where strippers from the U.S. and Canada were gathered to participate in "Star 83," the first annual strippers' convention. For three days, Gary and his crew followed strippers to convention events, which included seminars in plastic surgery and marriage counseling, as well as the Golden G-String Awards.

This interview was conducted the morning after the Golden G-String finals; the director spoke from his bed, where he lay fully clothed and hungover.

—James Verniere

HM: When did you first conceive of doing a film about strippers?

JG: I always wanted to do a film about them. When I got out of college, I lived with a stripper in San Francisco. This was a girl who was in the *corps de ballet* of the San Francisco Ballet and stripped to make money.

HM: What's it like to live with a stripper?

JG: Well, strippers are different from other people. If you don't think that's true, try taking your clothes off in front of an audience. I believe that there are things that make people act. For instance, a girl that takes off her clothes for a living is usually from a certain archetype. Strippers tend to come from broken homes. They tend to feel that they didn't get the attention they deserved when they were children. They tend to have estranged male images in their lives. So what you have often is a ruler with which you can measure almost all strippers. Then—phoenix-like—these women build, out of a disastrous personal life, a profession.

HM: Yet most of the women I've interviewed here claim not to be psychological victims, claim not to believe in the value of psychoanalysis.

JG: True; but Sarah, for instance, had an alchoholic father. Tasha is a kleptomaniac —and she makes twelve-hundred dollars a week as a dancer. Danyel had a stepfather who locked her in a closet and repeatedly molested her when she was a child. She subsequently went temporarily blind. Janette has the same, identical story.

HM: Did the woman you lived with have a similar history?

JG: No, she was from a fairly wholesome family in Illinois. She did it for the money. But she loved doing it. She did, though, feel guilty because she never

Wheee! Going down on another rod.
Photo by Mark Shaw

did what her father wanted, which was to become a doctor.

HM: What were your intentions in making this film?

JG: I'm trying to present the reality of something that is by its nature fantastical. Having lived with a stripper, I am in love with all of them. I find that they're so different from other women. Also, I personally love women, and I love beautiful women.

HM: Why have you excluded male strippers?

JG: I thought seriously about including them, but a film that tried to cover the men and the women would have been too much. And the fantasy really figures around the women.

HM: You've referred to *Stripper* as a feature documentary. What does that mean?

JG: It means that if you call a film a documentary, it's like giving it the measles at the box office. ***Pumping Iron*** was a documentary, but like any well-made documentary it played like fiction. We shot a high ratio; we used no narration. None of this Flaherty school of documentary, where you don't want to interfere with reality. What we do basically is try to create a reality because once you turn a camera on you're interfering with it. We stumbled onto a gold mine with *Stripper*. I wanted a film that *looked* elegant. So I'm using Ed Lachman, who is a magician at shooting spontaneously and getting great image quality. We've also created some controlled situations while trying to retain reality. So we've pre-lit some scenes and staged some of the action, like the contest.

HM: Are you exploiting an already exploitative profession?

JG: You know, some of the strippers have been using the word "exploitation" to me lately. They think I've come here to exploit them. I really felt bad about it because I thought they were right. From one point of view, they were right. But I think that when they see the film they will not feel that I've exploited them. However, it is true that we have not been able to pay people as much as we would like. They will benefit from any profits the film might make, though.

HM: Can you avoid glamorizing the profession?

JG: Glamorizing is an interesting word. What I'm doing is romanticizing the heroic mode. It's very much what we did in *Pumping Iron*. We're taking the people who are clearly the best and rendering them in a beautiful way.

HM: Are you prepared to be attacked by feminists for exploiting these women?

JG: Ask the strippers. When I ask them about it they say, "Who the fuck's exploiting who? You're paying me, asshole. And I'm in control." And many of them are into that power. When they're on that stage, they can do anything they want and no one can touch them.

HM: The emergence of Arnold Schwarzenegger was one of the phenomenons of *Pumping Iron*. Is there one stripper who is emerging as the central character in *Stripper*?

JG: I don't think that we'll have an outstanding character like that. Which is not to say that we won't launch a lot of careers. I think that different viewers will have different favorites.

HM: How will *Stripper* compare to a film like *Flashdance*, which pretends to be, on some level, about women who dance in little clothing before audiences of men?

JG: For me, *Flashdance* was like a ninety-minute commercial. We've got the reality. That has the bullshit. Our film will be distrubing because most people like to have a distance from their fantasies, and I think this film will force people to confront these women as real people and not just idealized figures.

SF SURPRISE

Is Norman Spinrad an agent of chaos? His career suggests so; worldly opinion seems to confirm.

Two of Spinrad's books have recently hit the stands—one fiction, the other non; both are brash, sharp, opinionated, demanding. They are experiences set down by a man who insists we listen to what, in the final analysis, is an outraged discourse on failed morality, and all the pigs out there who just don't have a clue.

We read Spinrad because he *does* clue us in and sharpen our wits for the grand fight. Because for Spinrad, all of us have our own kind of territorial imperative, a fine line we draw and dare bullies to cross. Outrage, he reminds us, is a weapon, but it's the line he's ultimately concerned with—the line

Wake up, Mr. Spinrad, it's time for your review!
Photo by Robert Bonifield

and the way we draw it.

In 1969 Spinrad wrote one of sf's perennially almost-classics, *Bug Jack Baron*. Could anyone in good conscience demur? Donald Wollheim greeted the book on its publication as "depraved, cynical, utterly repulsive, and thoroughly degenerate." Plenty of others heap abuse on Spinrad himself—sf's most strident voice—but the man whose controversial novel is now being filmed by director Costa-Gavras (*Missing, Hanna K*) is not looking over his shoulder.

Angry young men commonly fart out before they actually fall. Not Spinrad; at forty-three

the anger persists, and that willingness to chance all for the high stakes marks his latest, ***The Void Captain's Tale*** (Timescape), as an event that cannot be dismissed. There's nothing easy about the book, nothing predictable, just a hard painful try at getting the lines right, and the result just may be a moral masterpiece from the hands of the depraved, the repulsive, the never-say-die Norman Spinrad.

Not a masterpiece by any stretch is ***Staying Alive*** (The Donning Co.), but the fight continues in this collection of essays addressed primarily to writers about the trials and pitfalls of the scribbling-down life. The outrage is here, and here too is Spinrad the lawgiver, setting down the lines and daring the world to step across. One may agree or disagree with his stand (I found myself wishing he'd spent a few harried moments behind an editor's desk, looking for the Anacin beneath a solid wall of hot-shot writers' precious manuscripts), but the morality tale goes on.

"We read Spinrad because he *does* clue us in and sharpen our wits for the grand fight."

Piers Anthony's ***Bio of a Space Tyrant, Volume One: Refugee*** (Avon) will surprise many. Although best known for his best-selling light fantasies, Anthony has never turned his back on an ambition to do more than just entertain, and the steady trickle of unusual, striking, unclassifiable sf to his credit continues to surprise us all. On the face of it, *Refugee* is pure adventure pop: space pirates, rapine, etc.—but Anthony's relentlessly discursive style and strong voice slowly evoke a character not immediately apparent. This is a story of rape; maiming, bludgeoning, hurting, repeated, rape. If the book sounds ugly, it is. As ugly a book as I've ever read, and the ugliness is intended, visceral, and mean. Mean because the reader is the real victim, and that, clearly, was Anthony's intention all along—to trap his reader, male and female, into a smutty, sweaty heat and then thrust the dirty shameful fact home, again and again and again, until the one real glaring emotion is self-loathing. Where Anthony will take this series is anybody's guess, but the first volume proves its author a masterful, if brutal, psychologist, and proves something too of his readers: that all of us can still be surprised by sin.

Gregory Benford, too, has been known to treat the venal side of life in books which have quietly gone into the human dilemma and returned sadder but wiser. Benford's latest, ***Against Infinity*** (Timescape), however, is a book fumbling for something to say and coming up empty-handed. A mysterious universe is presumably Benford's topic in this hamfisted Ol'-Yeller-with-an-alien-twist tale, but the only mystery is why Benford has indulged his prodigious talent instead of directing it. In the past he has been one of the few sf writers able to reach down inside and pull up what hurts, but in *Against Infinity* his hand has closed on vacuum.

Bill Ransom is not a name many readers will recognize—at least not unless it's coupled, as it has been, with that of **Frank Herbert**. With a proven ability to prompt Herbert's best, it would be a shame if Ransom's talent as well as his name continued unrecognized. Although the Wizard of Dune's hand is clearly evident in ***The Lazarus Effect*** (Putnam), and its prequel *The Jesus Incident*, the collaboration is more personal, more heartfelt, and ultimately more satisfying than Herbert's own recent fiction. This story of Ship and the pitiable WorShippers may well find a permanent place in sf's most significant literature.

—John Silbersack

ARMS & BUD GROOVE ON SZUKALSKI
©1983 J.D.KING
YO, BUD, WHATCHA READIN'?
THIS REALLY FAR OUT BOOK, "INNER PORTRAITS," BY STANISLAW SZUKALSKI!
A
DUH... WHO'S HE? I NEVER HEARD OF THE GUY!
ALLOW ME TO ENLIGHTEN YOU 'CUZ THIS CAT IS SIMPLY ONE OF THE MOST FLIPPED OUT DUDES OF OUR TIME!
HE'S A SUPER ARTIST, TOTALLY INTO HIS DRAWING, PAINTING AND SCULPTURE! HIS PORTRAITS ARE POSITIVELY WIGGED! THEY DELVE INTO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND ARE CHOCK FULL OF SYMBOLISM! THE END RESULT IS BEYOND SURREALISM, BEYOND THE FANTASTIC, LIKE COMPLETELY GONE!
SOUNDS AWESOME!
IT IS! IT IS! BUT GET THIS—THE GUY IS 88 YEARS OLD AND STILL TURNS OUT TONS OF WORK IN HIS SMALL APARTMENT IN BURBANK, CA! A LOT OF HIS WORK WAS DESTROYED OR STOLEN BY THE NAZIS AND THE COMMUNISTS IN HIS NATIVE POLAND! BUT INSTEAD OF BEIN' BEAT BY THIS OPPRESSION, MAN, HE FIGHTS THE GOOD FIGHT!
HIS SMALL ARMY OF FANS INCLUDES UNDERGROUND LUMINARIES RICK GRIFFIN, ROBERT WILLIAMS AND R. CRUMB!
HMMM... LET ME SEE THIS STUFF!!
WOW! THIS IS COOL TO THE MAX!
I LOSE MORE BOOKS THAT WAY! GUESS I'LL HAVE TO SEND AWAY FOR ANOTHER ONE! HEY, IF YOU'D LIKE TO CHECK OUT "INNER PORTRAITS" WRITE TO GLENN BRAY, P.O. BOX 4482, SYLMAR, CA. 91342 FOR INFO!

NAHALLYWOOD

Fact #1: Movie producers love to make money.

Fact #2: Movie audiences love comedy.

Fact #3: Comedy is the flip side of tragedy.

Fact #4: Two of the biggest tragedies a teenager has to contend with are sex (as in "Didja get any?") and zits (as in: "Doya got any?").

Since zits aren't very pretty and even less funny, enterprising Hollywood has had to make do with cranking out surefire-hit teen flicks concerning . . . SEX!

Most of these alleged laughfests have been less than inspiring (I mean, *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* has got to be one of the *longest* ninety-minute films in history) with the majority of them falling into the category of "downright moronic" (*Private School, Private Lessons, Homework, The Last American Virgin*, the braindead title of your choice).

If the recent rash of teenie weiner movies has produced a single, shining talent, it is director **Martha Coolidge.**

On this sunny day, she is pacing the halls of a fairly staid hotel in Santa Monica, California . . . not the hippest city in America. A small army of her helpers are chasing after a gaggle of extras who resemble refugees from a bad taping session at MTV.

"Where is our naked Midnight Cowboy for the orgy scene?" someone yells down the corridor.

Coolidge leans against a wall and offers a sigh/smile, as a mob of barely post-teen actors are herded into a small hotel room, already crowded with lights and cameras.

Today, Coolidge has taken the cast and crew of ***National Lampoon's Joy of Sex*** into this small town for a week's worth of work. Santa Monica may never be the same. Neither may Coolidge.

A young actor breaks into a pretty accurate imitation of Mick Jagger caught in a mix-master while awaiting his cue.

"How would I describe this movie?" Coolidge ponders between shots. "I'd call it whimsical, but that sounds too lightweight. It's not slapstick, nor is it farce or satire. It isn't a broad comedy, either.

"It's very bizarre. It's very sweet. It's very tasteful. And, although *nobody* gets any sex and everyone is totally frustrated, the picture is very joyful. It takes a very positive look at teenage life. Nobody goes away traumatized."

Martha Coolidge and cast members.

If Coolidge's description of *National Lampoon's Joy of Sex* sounds diametrically opposed to the movie's title, no one should be surprised.

In 1982, Coolidge astounded critics across the country by taking a "typical" teen exploitation film, ***Valley Girl***, and transforming it into a funny, touching and wonderfully exhilarating (albeit off-center) new-wave romance. *Valley Girl*, in terms of honesty and technical savvy, made *Porky's* look like the piece of Cro-magnon crud it was suspected of being.

Valley Girl, Coolidge's first "commercial" movie, quickly established her as a director with both smarts and heart, and brought her to the attention of Paramount Studios. Although she wasn't aware of it at the time, *Joy of Sex* had been on the back burner for a couple of years, with a few directors trying (and failing) to launch it with various scripts. Coolidge said yes to an all-new script, and signed *Valley Girl* veterans Colleen Camp, Michelle Meyrink and Cameron Dye.

Coolidge: "I seem to be able to put myself into a teenage frame of mind when I make a movie. I don't know why. Maybe it's because I see reality as being pretty funny."

Coolidge hopes that the finished film will be both zany and endearing. "I try to avoid making my characters into caricatures," she says. "I don't think it's all that hard to do and I can't understand why it isn't done more in teenage movies. If you pay attention to the details and the reality of the situation, you should never have to worry about stereotypes. I mean, situations can be clichéd, but that doesn't mean they can't be *real*.

"I think *Joy of Sex*'s script is a lot wilder than *Valley Girl*'s. It has a multiple story line but, mainly, it's about a girl who mistakenly thinks she's dying and wants to experience sex before she checks out—because she won't have time for love. Her father, however, is the high school coach and won't let anybody near her.

"Our hero also wants to have his first sexual encounter because he thinks all his friends have already scored, and he feels ter-ri-ble about this black hole in his life."

Despite its potential for overt raunch, Coolidge feels that the film will surprise a lot of people. "It doesn't insult the intelligence of the audience," she says. "Most teen-oriented comedies treat kids like miniature adults who are sleazy. People forget that kids aren't sleazy when they're kids. They're not jaded." She stifles a laugh. "That all comes *later*!

"Really successful teenage comedies, like *Animal House*, are intelligent movies made by intelligent people. I mean, *Animal House* wasn't *War and Peace*, but it wasn't trying to be. It was a funny movie that didn't treat its audience like idiots. It didn't pander.

"You watch some of the current teen comedies and you just know that they've been written by jaded adults who aren't trying to put themselves into the kids' place. A lot of moviemakers forget how fresh and really important these experiences are. Adolescence is magic and fun. But there's pain involved, too.

"*Joy of Sex* is funnier than *Valley Girl*—it pokes a bit more fun at the bumbling, the awkwardness. Hopefully, it gives you a kid's fresh, naive view of situations we'd consider sleazy. There are adults in the movie who are laughably sleazy . . . but the kids' attitudes are pretty pure."

Coolidge reflects for a moment. "Three years ago," she marvels, "I never would have thought that I'd become a director identified with teenaged comedies. All I had done were very serious films."

Prior to *Valley Girl*, Coolidge had garnered a reputation as a top-notch documentary filmmaker. Her semi-autobiographical study of teenage rape, *Not a Pretty Picture*, earned her global accolades. Eventually, she wound up at Zoetrope where, for three years, she prepared a rock 'n' roll romance, *Photoplay*. When Zoetrope floundered and *Photoplay* fizzled, she headed for Canada. A comedy-drama called *City Girl* was filmed (although it's yet to be released). At that point, Hollywood beckoned.

"When I was offered *Valley Girl*," Coolidge recalls, "I saw that it could be a really silly film. I tried to avoid that. I think that adolescence is a very important time of life. I haven't forgotten that. I take adolescence very seriously. I take comedy very seriously.

"The most important thing about making a teenage movie is to never underestimate your audience. I never try to simplify either the characters or their situations. Young people are neither stupid nor simple-minded, yet they're often treated that way by filmmakers. A lot of teenage movies don't fascinate me and if they don't fascinate me *now*, I don't see how they could have fascinated me when I was fourteen. I seem to be able to put myself into a teenage frame of mind when I make a movie. I don't know why. Maybe it's because I see reality as being pretty funny. That's my perception."

Coolidge's seriousness about teenage spoofery is pretty startling . . . especially considering that, not five feet away, actors

dressed as everything from punks to bellboys are cavorting like mutant Marx brothers.

Coolidge, catching the action, offers a "but seriously folks" rundown of some of *National Lampoon's Joy of Sex* stranger scenes, antics that range from Bunsen burner blow-outs in biology labs to love-making sessions in graveyards.

"The graveyard scene was strange," she admits. "Our heroine is making it in a car, and accidentally kicks the car into gear. It rolls down a hill and winds up in a grave. That was bizarre. Even more bizarre was the fact that we couldn't use a real cemetery, so we had to shoot in a park and bring our own tombstones."

At that point, the Midnight Cowboy is found and the hotel room scene is ready to be filmed. "Our heroine has this really fatalistic attitude about romance," Coolidge offers en route to the room. "I can identify with that."

Coolidge casually walks into the room and orchestrates the chaos. Clearly, this woman is serious about her zaniness. The outrageously garbed actors and actresses snap to within minutes. Watching the action, one has the feeling that Coolidge, given the opportunity, could tackle any topic and make it both hilarious and touching.

Who knows? Today *National Lampoon's Joy of Sex*.

Tomorrow? Zits!

IN THE WORKS: After nearly two years of struggling, producer-director **Steven Paul** has finalized plans to distribute his independent production, ***Slapstick***, in the U.S. The movie, based on the novel by **Kurt Vonnegut**, stars **Jerry Lewis**, **Madeline Kahn** and the late **Marty Feldman** . . . **Burt Lancaster** and **George C. Scott** will join **Drew Barrymore** and **David Keith** in ***Firestarter***, producer Dino DeLaurentiis's version of the **Stephen King** book . . . Tough-talking mystery writer **Mickey Spillane** will star in ***Sleuth Slayer*** a spoof on (what else?) detective stories . . . *Wargames*' **Matthew Broderick** has teamed with *Blade Runner*'s **Rutger Hauer** in **Richard** (*Superman*) **Donner**'s swashbuckling ***Ladyhawke*** . . . **Bud Cort**, **Dick Shawn**, **Carol Kane**, and **Klaus Kinski** are currently making with the introspection in Yugoslavia for the comedy ***The Secret Diary of Sigmund Freud*** . . . **Sybil Danning** plans on keeping nothing secret in ***The Most Dangerous Man Alive*** . . . **Charles Bronson** is contemplating ***Death Wish III*** . . . Also in the planning stages is ***Flashdance II*** but without star **Jennifer Beales** . . . **Jamie Lee Curtis** will star in ***Grandview U.S.A.*** . . . **Peter Hyams** (*Capricorn One*, *Outland*) is planning on writing and directing ***2010: Odyssey Two*** for a Christmas '84 release. Director **David Lynch**, meanwhile, is readying his $40 million ***Dune*** for a summer '84 unveiling. 1984, at this point, is shaping up as a strong year for genre films with ***Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom***, ***Supergirl***, ***Santa Claus*** and ***Conan, King of Thieves*** in the offing.

—Ed Naha

LASERDISC CITY—A LOOK AT THE 1983 A.M.O.A. VIDEO GAME CONVENTION

©1983, BY JOHN HOLMSTROM & STEVE BLOOM

NEW ORLEANS—BETTER KNOWN FOR BOURBON STREET, SOUTHERN COMFORT, AND A KNOCKOUT PUNCH CALLED THE HURRICANE—WAS TRANSFORMED INTO LASERDISC CITY THIS PAST HALLOWEEN WEEKEND, AS THE ARCADE GAME INDUSTRY CONVENED FOR ITS SEMI-ANNUAL TRADE SHOW. UNLIKE THE MOST RECENT GATHERINGS OF THE A.M.O.A., THIS WAS A SHOW FILLED WITH SURPRISES AND DOMINATED BY INNOVATION.

EVERY MAJOR COMPANY CAME PREPARED TO MEET THE LASERDISC CHALLENGE, WHICH PROVED TO BE A VIABLE NEW VIDEO GAME FRONTIER BY THE OVERWHELMING SUCCESS OF DRAGON'S LAIR, ESSENTIALLY, THERE WERE TWO TYPES OF DISC GAMES ON VIEW: SHOOT-EM-UPS THAT COMBINE ACTUAL-FILMED FOOTAGE WITH COMPUTER-GENERATED IMAGES, AND CARTOONS THAT REQUIRE PRECISION TIMING IN ORDER TO FOLLOW THE STORY THROUGH ITS MANY ACTION-PACKED SEQUENCES—**MYLSTAR'S MACH 3** AND **BALLY'S ASTRON BELT** ARE EXAMPLES OF THE FORMER. IN M.A.C.H. 3, YOU HAVE A CHOICE OF EITHER THE FIGHTER RAID (AN INTENSE FLYING MISSION OVER UTAH CANYONS) OR BOMBER RUN (XEVIOUS TO THE MAX). ASTRON BELT ALSO SIMULATES FLIGHT (IN SPACE), BUT TOO OFTEN LEAVES YOU AT THE CONTROLS WITH LITTLE TO DO BUT SHOOT. M.A.C.H. IS THE BETTER OF THE TWO, BUT NOT BY MUCH.

STERN'S CLIFF HANGER, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS THE BEST OF THE NEW CARTOON GAMES. THOUGH THE ANIMATION IS NOT UP TO DRAGON'S LAIR'S, IT IS ABOVE-AVERAGE, WHICH IS MORE THAN CAN BE SAID FOR **CENTURI'S BADLAND'S** AND **DATA EAST'S BEGA'S BATTLE**, BOTH SCHLOCKY PRODUCTIONS. IN CLIFF HANGER, YOU PLAY THE PART OF CLIFF, A WISE-GUY THIEF AND JAPANESE CARTOON HERO (WHERE HE'S KNOWN AS LUPEN). THE ACTION BEGINS WITH A GETAWAY SCENE—CLIFF RUNNING FRANTICALLY FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, AWAY FROM HIS PURSUERS. A BARRICADE IS IN HIS WAY, AT WHICH POINT THE MACHINE COMMANDS LOUDLY, "JUMP," AND ALSO READS OUT "ACTION" AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SCREEN. ACTION MEANS YOU MUST USE EITHER OF YOUR TWO BUTTONS (FOOT AND HAND) IMMEDIATELY. TO JUMP, PRESS THE FOOT BUTTON. TIMING, NOT SKILL, IS KEY HERE, SO BE READY TO HIT THE BUTTON OR MOVE THE STICK IN ONE OF FOUR DIRECTIONS ON COMMAND.

AS FAR AS CONVENTIONAL VIDEOS WERE CONCERNED, THERE WASN'T A LOT TO SAMPLE, BESIDES **LIR**, **PAC-MAN** (THE MAZE SCROLLS LEFT AND RIGHT), **DONKEY KONG 3** (SPRAY KONG AND HIS ASSORTED INSECT FOLLOWERS WITH BUG REPELLENT), **POLE POSITION 2** (A NEW COURSE), AND **MR. DO'S CASTLE**. GET THE IDEA? ATARI PREVIEWED A THREE-SCREEN DRIVING GAME, **TX-1**, AND **THE ADVENTURES OF MAJOR HAVOC**, A SPACE GAME SPOOF THAT VIDEO GAME WIZARD LEO DANIELS CALLED "AWESOME" ACCORDING TO MANY. EUGENE "ROBOTRON / DEFENDER" JARVIS'S NEWEST ENTRY, **BLASTER**, A 3-D SHOOT-EM-UP, WAS LESS THAN AWESOME, AN OPINION I DIDN'T SUBSCRIBE TO ENTIRELY. THEN THERE WAS **BOUNCER**, ONE OF THE MORE SKILLFULLY-DRAWN COMPUTER-ANIMATED GAMES THAT'S ESPECIALLY ENJOYABLE BECAUSE YOU LITERALLY GET TO BOUNCE HEADS AROUND LIKE BASKETBALLS. FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY.

OVERALL, THE CONSENSUS WAS THAT LASERDISC GAMES, EVEN AT 50 CENTS A POP, WILL TEMPORARILY SAVE THE DAY FOR THE ARCADE BUSINESS. VIDEO GAMES AREN'T DEAD, THEY'RE JUST GETTING A FACELIFT.

—STEVE BLOOM

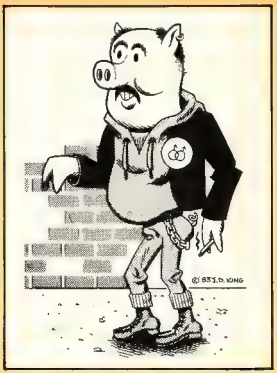
CRYPTICA

Minnesota Facts • Follow this closely—your sanity may depend on it. The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (phew!) has just been updated. What? Impossible! Dispatch the Marines . . . uncover the silos . . . begin the countdown! Down Ronnie, down boy.

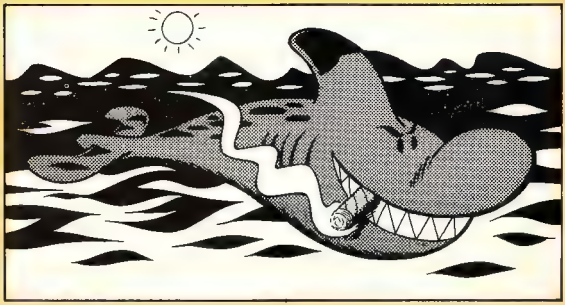
The MMPI is a questionnaire originally developed in the late thirties to determine how badly and in what areas anyone might be nuts. To do that, the researchers had to come up with some indicator of normality for comparison purposes. So, a control group of arguably sane people were tested and their scores formed into a composite model. The average membership of this group turned out to be thirty-five-year-old married Minnesota residents of small farm communities with eight years education . . .

Cut to almost fifty post-Hitler, drug-crazed, nuke-threatened years later, and along comes Robert C. Colligan of Minnesota's reknowned Mayo Clinic. Being a take-charge psychologist and a contemporary kind of guy, he decides the parameters of normality have to be brought up to date. So he undertakes a new study with a modern control group, as before randomly selected. Trouble is, compared to the first bunch, the modern "normals" have significantly higher scores—i.e. they're pretty pathological. Instead of facing the facts, he sets about weeding out the extremes to get a more even distribution of normal scores (it's all in the mind anyway, right?) So the crazier the world gets the more they try to persuade us we're normal. Somebody should tell Colligan that it's okay: we saner ones know how crazy we are

Messcargot • Can you imagine Parisians stooping to pooper-scooping? Forget it. How then do they deal with the megatonnage of wriggling poodle-doo besmirching the Elysian sidewalks of the Heavenly City? Naturally they don't go near the stuff. Instead, the city has recently deployed a fleet of seventy motorbikes equipped with shit-picking devices to patrol the pavements night and day. The bikes, 250cc Yamahas called "caninettes," are fitted with four brush sets around the edges of a rear-mounted container. The biker gets into position so that the cleaning gear in back can descend and swallow. Once inside, the brown bombs are defused with disinfectant. Rumor has it the stuff is recycled and exported to the States as croissants.



Pay for the Perker • The half-starved people of Haiti—one of the world's poorest countries—are a step closer to full starvation. They've just lost a primary source of protein: all the pigs in Haiti have been destroyed to prevent the spread of African Swine Fever. Does that name ring a bell? When African Swine Fever first made its western debut in Cuba around 1975, there were all kinds of rumors about the CIA using bio-warfare to damage the Cuban economy. In 1979, Haitian pigs developed the disease. Then, in the summer of 1982, scientists at Harvard claimed it was the pigs' version of AIDS, and possibly the source of human AIDS as well. They pointed to strong circumstantial evidence: the location (Haiti), the timing (1979), and the symptoms (very similar). Someone must have eaten an infected pig, they thought. But when it was proved the disease couldn't be transmitted that way, everybody breathed a sigh of relief—well, almost everybody. One English journalist, Duncan Fallowell, recently managed to utter in the London *Times* what many have been thinking privately: that VD first began as a result of humans having sex with animals. I don't know much about Haitian voodoo rituals, but . . .



Illustrations by J. D. King

Sea Sick • Fish cancer—not an affliction where humans develop fish-like growths, but a disease that causes water-dwellers to develop human-style tumors—is sweeping American lakes. That, according to no less an authority than Dr. Harshbarger (!), director of the Smithsonian Institution's Registry of Tumors in Lower Animals (politicians and below). Proof of the epidemic came after scientists sampled five fresh water locations across the USA from Washington state to New York. The sites are near industrial centers that contaminate the lakes with pollutants. Naturally, any connection between the pollution and cancer is purely circumstantial. Plenty of government money should be spent on discovering the *real* cause. How about the connection between modern fish lifestyles and increased smoking—whence we derive smoked salmon, smoked trout, smoked eel, etc.? • 'Course, if fish were shark eaters they'd discover a perfectly good cancer cure staring them in the gills. Researchers Anne Lee and Robert Langer, from MIT and Boston's Childrens' Hospital, have experimented with the fins of Basking Sharks and found that the concoction prevents tumors from forming. Apparently something in the fin-extract impedes the gathering of blood vessels into solid cancers—a disease sharks never get. However, with water purity being what it is these days, sharks may have to hold onto every ounce of fin-filler they possess to stay healthy. Or give up smoking

—Melik Kaylan

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HEY! HUBBA HUBBA! WHAT A LOOKER! HOT BOY! SHE'S A CUTIE AN' A BEAUTY! REMINDS ME OF THAT WHAT'S HER NAME DAME. WONDER IF SHE COULD GO FOR AN OLDER GUY... NICE SET O' GAMS ON 'ER... I DUNNO... GIRLS TODAY... PRETTY FREE 'N' EASY, I GUESS...
HEY! STOP THINKIN', PAL! I CAN'T SEE HER NAY-NAYS!
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RODA AND THE WOLF
RRROOAAAWWWWWRRR
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NI MORTU!
KA NAGA!

NI KORDU, RODA SAN WAZA
NO ZAGWOK TAN MAGO LOK
TI NEKRO MANGALOD TU ZUMBA SI GRINDA
EEEHHAAAWWWWWRRRRRLLL!!

RODA, SE COM DU MOK?

SI GRINDA SON KU NA WAGU.
TUMA SI LAGO COMDU WAN SI DOMA
TAN MU SU MAGA WAN DO.
SI DU MAGALAO. KO DI LUNA
KANKU NO MUUDA LAN GOTLY ME

GANTO SU AYES MO GRINDA,
WAZA KON AYESDU RODA
GANTO SU SODOCS MO GRINDA
WAZA KON SODOW, RODA
GANTO SU SMASE MO GRINDA
WAZA KON SMASEU, RODA
GANTO SU DENTAC, MO GRINDA
WAZA KON MAGADENT MO RODA, MO RODA!

GGGRRROOOAAAWWWWRRRGG!!
SNAP
CHUNK!
YAAAAARRRR!

SNARLLL!
GAAAGH!
SKLARRCKH!
GRINDA!
THE END

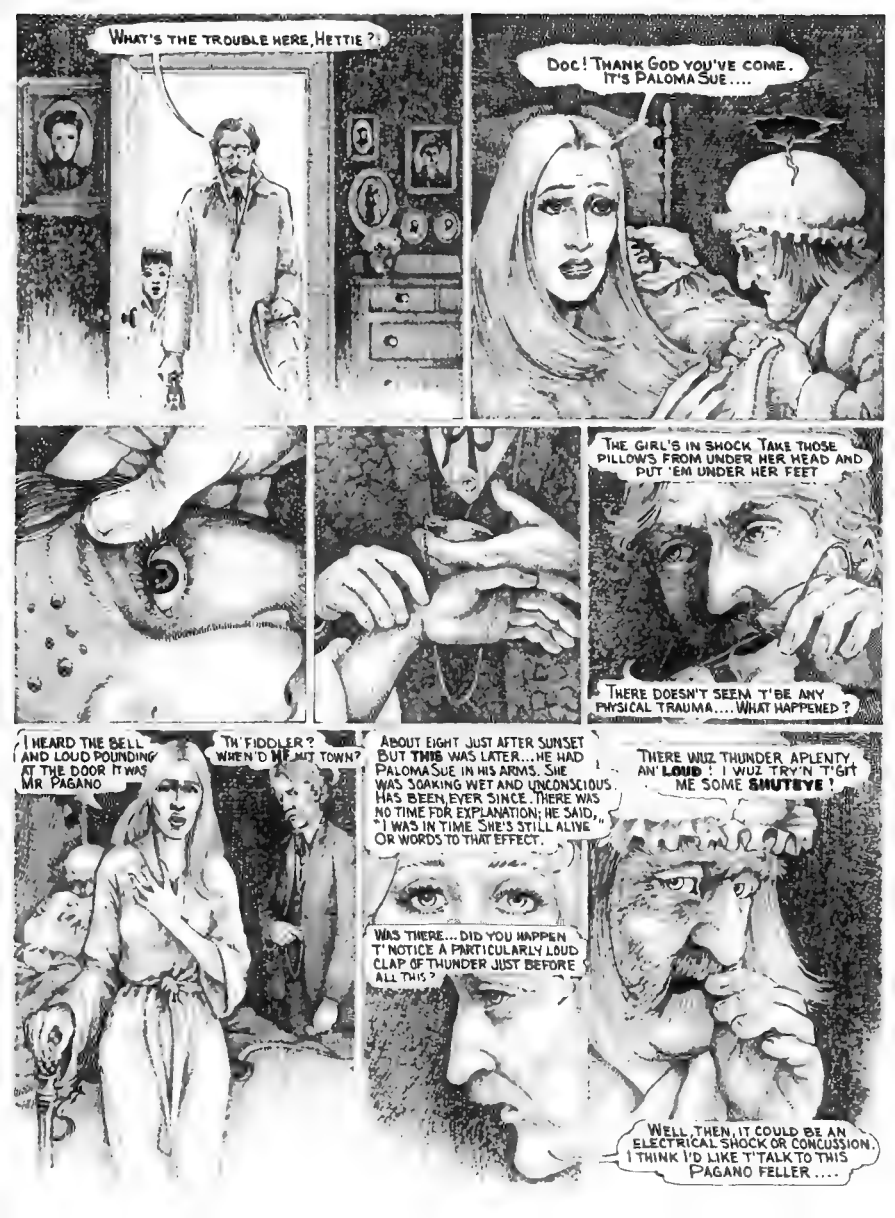
TEX ARCANA

MEETS THE TOAST OF EUROPE · PART FIVE

©1983 John Findley

HELLO, AGAIN AND HOW ARE YOU?
IN OUR LAST ACTION PACKED EPISODE, WE SAW OUR OLD FRIENDS **HERP AND SWEAZ** TWIRLED AWAY TO **GOD KNOWS WHERE** BY A TORNADO, **PALOMA SUE** - THE ATTRACTIVE AMERINDIAN SERVANT TO THE **WIDOW BURNS** - SAVED FROM ATTACK (AND DRAPE) BY **MAESTRO PAGANO, THE TOAST OF EUROPE,** WHO HAS YET TO SET BOW TO FIDDLE; AND THE LONG ANTICIPATED ARRIVAL OF A PARTICULARLY VIOLENT THUNDERSTORM. RETURN WITH ME NOW TO THE BOARDING HOUSE OF THE WIDOW BURNS. YOUNG **JULIO** HAS BEEN SENT TO THE **NOOSE AND GIBBET SALOON** TO FETCH **DOC MASON**, WHILE MRS BURNS AND **WIDOW BLACK** ATTEND TO THE UNCONSCIOUS FORM OF PALOMA SUE.

DRY HER HAIR AND TUCK HER IN. I'LL START A FIRE GOING.
FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, MILDRED, COVER THE CHILD! DO YOU WANT HER TO CATCH HER DEATH!
WHAT IS IT, MILDRED? YOU LOOK AS IF YOU'D NEVER SEEN A WOMAN'S BODY!
IT'S SIN. THAT'S WHAT IT IS, HETTIE. BLACK SIN!


WHAT'S THE TROUBLE HERE, HETTIE ?!
DOC! THANK GOD YOU'VE COME. IT'S PALOMA SUE....
THE GIRL'S IN SHOCK. TAKE THOSE PILLOWS FROM UNDER HER HEAD AND PUT 'EM UNDER HER FEET
THERE DOESN'T SEEM T'BE ANY PHYSICAL TRAUMA....WHAT HAPPENED ?
I HEARD THE BELL AND LOUD POUNDING AT THE DOOR. IT WAS MR PAGANO
TH' FIDDLER ? WHEN'D HE HIT TOWN?
ABOUT EIGHT JUST AFTER SUNSET BUT THIS WAS LATER... HE HAD PALOMA SUE IN HIS ARMS. SHE WAS SOAKING WET AND UNCONSCIOUS. HAS BEEN, EVER SINCE. THERE WAS NO TIME FOR EXPLANATION; HE SAID, "I WAS IN TIME. SHE'S STILL ALIVE" OR WORDS TO THAT EFFECT.
WAS THERE... DID YOU HAPPEN T' NOTICE A PARTICULARLY LOUD CLAP OF THUNDER JUST BEFORE ALL THIS ?
THERE WUZ THUNDER APLENTY AN' LOUD ! I WUZ TRY'N T'GIT ME SOME SHUTEYE !
WELL, THEN, IT COULD BE AN ELECTRICAL SHOCK OR CONCUSSION. I THINK I'D LIKE T'TALK TO THIS PAGANO FELLER....

MEANWHILE, IN THE MOUNTAINS TO THE WEST...

WHY'D YA HAFTA TAKE SUCH A BIG CHANCE? YOU OUGHTA, LIKE, KNOW BETTER. AFTER ALL, YER S'POSED T' BE TH' BRAINS IN THIS DEMONIC DUO. NOW WHERE ARE YA? NOPLACE, JACK! MAN, YA KNOW, WE AIN'T LIKE PEOPLE. WE CAN LIVE FOREVER, SURE, BUT WE GOT NO SOULS. IF WE GIT OURSELVES KILLED, THAT'S IT. NO PLACE ELSE T'GO... JUST, LIKE, NUTHIN'.
WHITE GODDESS! IF ONLY YOU COULD HELP. BUT I GUESS THIS PLACE AIN'T EXACTLY IN YOUR BAILIWICK. OR IS IT? DO YOU RECOGNIZE YOUR OLD SERVANTS, HERE, IN COW COUNTRY?
AH, SWEAZ! WHY'D YA HAFTA BE SO STUPID? IT AIN'T LIKE THERE'S, YA KNOW, DEMONS ON EVERY CORNER. WHERE'M I GONNA FIND ANOTHER PAL LIKE YOU?
CAN'T EVEN WEEP, CREATURES LIKE US. BUT I OUGHTA WEEP FOR YOU, OL' BUDDY.
AIN'T NUTHIN', ONLY A FEW RAINDROPS, BUT I'M, LIKE, PRETENDIN' THAT THEY'RE TEARS... OKAY?

HAVE A LI'L MORE WINE BEFORE WE GO BACK T'TH' OL' HOMESTEAD?
Tō mē þǣm mōnan sprǣc, and þus cwæð: "Gang and mīn cnapa gehǣle."
OKAY, WELL... IF YA NEED ME, I'LL BE RIGHT HERE.

WHAT'RE WE...? HOW'D WE GET HERE?
YIPES!
WHAT'S TH' MATTER, HERP? YOU LOOK AS IF YOU'D JUST BEEN INTRODUCED TO AN EXORCIST.
NNNNNNHHHHYY...
YEOW!
?
WHAT? DID YOU COME ACROSS A PATCH O' NIGHTSHADE OUT THERE? OR HAVE YOU BEEN DOIN' SOME O' THAT LOCO WEED THEY GOT AROUND HERE?
NO... I JUST MANAGED T' BITE MY HAND AN' CLAW MY MOUTH, AT TH' SAME TIME!

YA OUGHTA THINK ABOUT TRIMMIN' THOSE THINGS.... SO, ANYHOW, HOW'D WE GET HERE? LAST THING I REMEMBER WAS FALLIN' INTO A RAGING TORRENT.
YOU MUSTA REMEMBERED TH' RAGING TORRENT SPELL, EH?
NO, SWEAZ. I JUMPED IN AN', LIKE, GRABBED YA, AN' WE SPILLED OUT INTA A YAWNING ABYSS....
AND YOU REMEMBERED TH' YAWNING ABYSS SPELL, RIGHT?
YEAH. RIGHT. BUT.... WHERE'R WE GOIN'?
JUST EXPLORIN'.
BUT I MUSTA PRONOUNCED IT WRONG, OR SOMETHIN', 'CAUSE UP CAME THIS BIG WHIRLWIND!
NAH... THAT'S TH' WAY IT WORKS.
WELL... AN' THEN, SOMEHOW, WE ENDED UP HERE.
LOOK! SHARDS OF PRIMITIVE POTTERY!
I GOTTA TELL YA, SWEAZ, NO LIE, MAN, I THOUGHT YOU'D, LIKE, BITTEN TH' BIG WIENIE!
HUH? WHAT TH' HELL'S THAT MEAN?
YOU KNOW, LIKE BOUGHT TH' FARM.
COME AGAIN?
DIED, MAN! SNUFF CITY. I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD!
WHY WOULD YOU (SNIFF) THINK THAT?
LET'S SEE... YOU LOOKED DEAD, YOU ACTED DEAD, YOU FELT DEAD, YOU JUST SEEMED DEAD. ... UM, OH, YEAH! AND YOU WEREN'T BREATHIN'.
AFTER ALL THIS TIME YOU OUGHTA KNOW THE ONLY TIME I BREATHE IS WHEN I DRINK... HELPS METABOLIZE TH' ALCOHOL.
TAKE A LOOK AT THAT! NOW, THAT'S DEAD.

JEEZ, SWEAZ, THE POOR SON OF A BITCH! HOW COULD SOMETHIN' LIKE THIS HAPPEN?
WISH T'HELL I KNEW, HERP.
TO BE CONTINUED.

THE THIRD INCAL

STARTING FROM THE BOTTOM

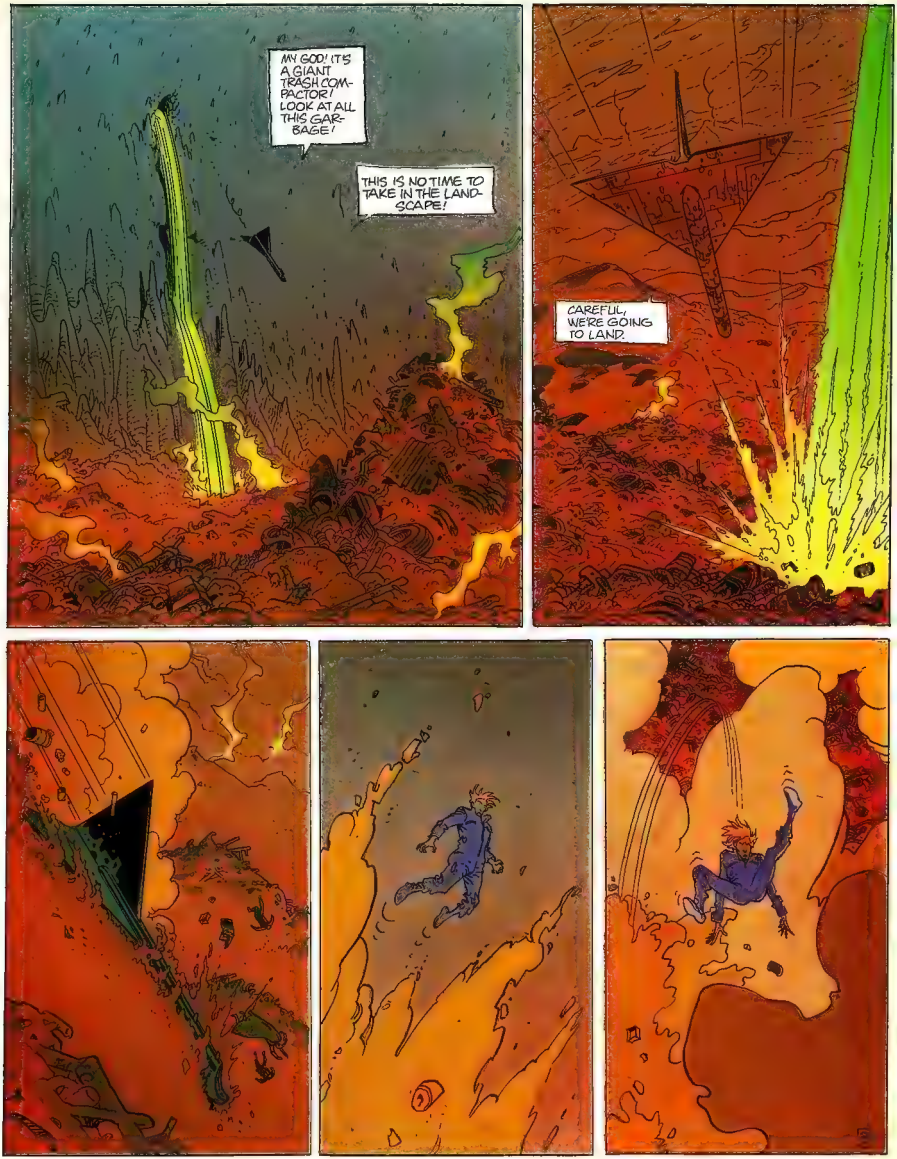
THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF JOHN DIFOOL

by Jodorowsky and Moebius

WHEN LAST WE READ IN THE SECOND BOOK OF *THE INCAL*, JOHN DIFOOL, DEEPO, META BARON AND HIS SON, AND QUEEN OF AMOK AND DOGHEAD WERE TRYING TO ESCAPE THE SINISTER WHIRLPOOL IN THE ACID LAKE. BUT WHERE'S THE INCAL? WILL IT BE ABLE TO SAVE THEM IN TIME?

THIS TIME, THE INCAL HAS ABANDONED ME. WE'RE LOST, FOR SURE!
THE WHIRLPOOL MUST LEAD SOMEWHERE!
YEAH, AS LONG AS THE SHELL WITHSTANDS THE ACID!
IT'S LIKE A GIANT SUBTERRANEAN RIVER!

HANG ON! WE'VE GOT TO STAY TOGETHER!
I THINK WE'RE COMING TO THE EXIT!
I RECOGNIZE THAT LIGHT! IT'S THAT OF THE CENTER-EARTH REGIONS!
THAT'S IT! WE'RE SAFE!
HMMM... I WONDER!
AND NOW?
IT'S HOPELESS! WE'LL BE CRUSHED AT THE BOTTOM!


MY GOD! IT'S A GIANT TRASH COMPACTOR! LOOK AT ALL THIS GARBAGE!
THIS IS NO TIME TO TAKE IN THE LANDSCAPE!
CAREFUL, WE'RE GOING TO LAND.

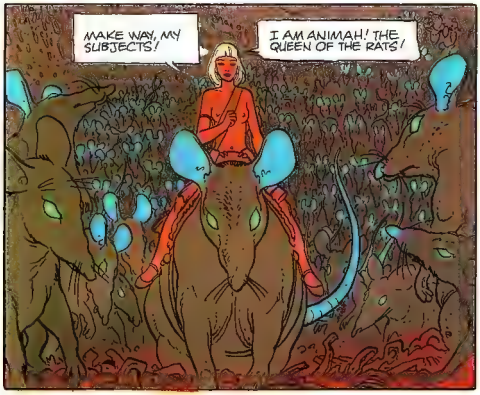
POLOOF
BOY, DOES IT EVER STINK IN HERE!
YUCCCKKK... HEY!
A RAT! A HUGE RAT!
??

HOLY SHIT
NO OH NO...
EEEEK!
WHERE CAN WE HIDE? THERE'S GARBAGE EVERYWHERE!
TRY AND GET US!
NO, JOHN! WE DON'T HAVE A CHANCE! WE HAVE TO CALL THE INCAL!
INCAL!
INCAL!..
INCAL!
INCAL!..
INCAL!
IN-CALL!
5

NOAL!

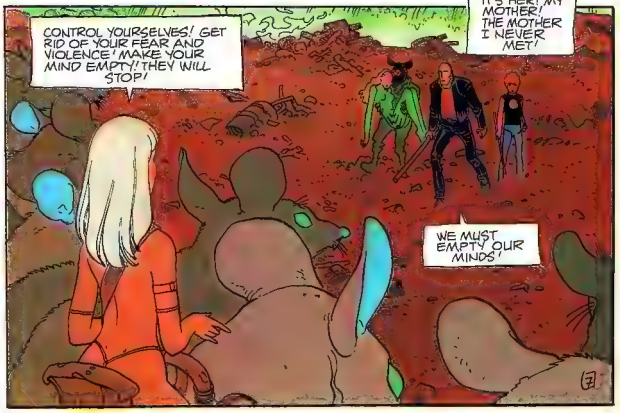
THEY SEEM TO HAVE STOPPED GROWING!
THERE ARE MILLIONS OF THEM! WHAT ARE THEY WAITING FOR?
GRRR..THEY BETTER NOT TOUCH A HAIR ON HER HEAD!

THERE! THE WALL LOOKS AS IF IT'S OPENING!


MAKE WAY, MY SUBJECTS!
I AM ANIMAH! THE QUEEN OF THE RATS!

THEY'RE BACKING UP!
WHERE ARE YOU, ANIMAH? IF YOU DO CONTROL THESE MONSTERS, SAVE US.
WAKE UP! OPEN YOUR EYES!.. PLEASE!

THESE ARE THE PSYCHO-RATS! THE MORE YOU FEAR THEM, THE MORE THEY MULTIPLY AND GROW!


CONTROL YOURSELVES! GET RID OF YOUR FEAR AND VIOLENCE! MAKE YOUR MIND EMPTY! THEY WILL STOP!
IT'S HER! MY MOTHER! THE MOTHER I NEVER MET!
WE MUST EMPTY OUR MINDS!

mmm
STOP GROWLING, DOGHEAD!..
THESE RATS AND CATS ARE DRIVING ME CRAZY!
...THAT YOUR MIND BE AS EMPTY AS THE HOLE OF YOUR EAR!
AS FOR THE JERK, JOHN DIFOOL, I'LL STRANGLE HIM WITH MY BARE HANDS!
BY GOD! JOHN WILL NEVER WITHSTAND SUCH A TEST!
UNLESS...THERE! THAT'S HIM!
JOHN DIFOOL!
DEEPO! THE INCAL REVEALED TO ME THE SECRET OF THE PSYCHO-RATS!
ANIMAH! THERE YOU ARE AGAIN! FINALLY!
QUICK! WE'RE IN DANGER! GET ON BEHIND ME!
JOHN DIFOOL IS ALIVE!

I WAS ABLE TO STABILIZE THESE PSYCHO-RATS! THEY WILL CARRY US THROUGH THE GARBAGE!
GODMOTHER! GODMOTHER! WAKE UP!
SHE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW WHO I AM!
WHAT A SCENE!
GARBAGE AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE!
IT IS, HOWEVER, THE ONLY WAY TO REACH THE HEART OF THE PLANET!
MY DETECTORS HAVE TRACKED THEM! DIFOOL AND THE OTHERS ARE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE ACID WHIRLPOOL!
HAHAHA! THEY CAN'T ESCAPE ME!
3

TO BE CONTINUED...

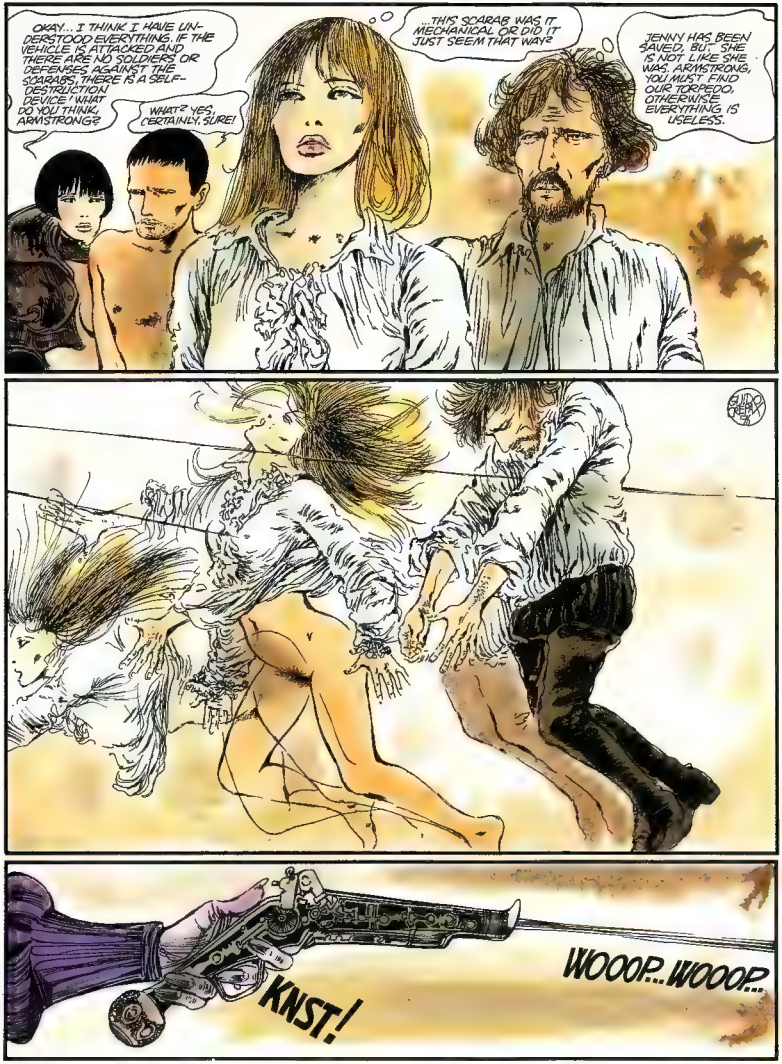
VALENTINA THE PIRATE

VALENTINA'S JUMBLED DREAMS BECOME A REALITY WHEN THE HIGH MAGISTRATE COMES TO SETTLE THE SCORE...

I AM THE HIGH MAGISTRATE SENT TO SETTLE—WITH IMPARTIALITY, OF COURSE—ANY INTERPLANETARY CONTROVERSY.
TWO AGENTS FROM THE SECRET SERVICE OF JOVE HAVE ATTACKED WITHOUT JUSTIFICATION. THEN THEY PROVOKED THE INTERVENTION OF THE POLICE AND CONFISCATED THE SPACESHIP. I DEMAND AN IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION TO HELP MY COMPANIONS WHO ARE IN DANGER
AN IMMEDIATE INTERVENTION IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT A PRECISE STATEMENT OF THE FACTS!
I JUST TOLD YOU! AH, IT'S TOO LATE NOW, ANYWAY!

HMGH - UHGH GH!
HERE I AM!
LOOK HERE..
ZRT ZRR!!
ZZK!
...OR THERE!

JENNY!
WHAT A BORE!
JENNY HAS ARMSTRONGS SHIRT! I CAN SEE HER NOW!
BUT...
WHAT IS JENNY THINKING ABOUT? ME OR...
WE MUST LEAVE AT ONCE. THE ASTRO CAR IS FALLING APART!
GROOAAA


OKAY... I THINK I HAVE UNDERSTOOD EVERYTHING. IF THE VEHICLE IS ATTACKED AND THERE ARE NO SOLDIERS OR DEFENSES AGAINST THE SCARABS, THERE IS A SELF-DESTRUCTION DEVICE. WHAT DO YOU THINK, ARMSTRONG?
WHAT? YES, CERTAINLY. SURE!
...THIS SCARAB WAS IT MECHANICAL OR DID IT JUST SEEM THAT WAY?
JENNY HAS BEEN SAVED, BU-" SHE IS NOT LIKE SHE WAS, ARMSTRONG, YOU MUST FIND OUR TORPEDO, OTHERWISE EVERYTHING IS USELESS.
KNST!
WOOOP... WOOOP...

ANY SABOTAGE OF INTERPLANETARY BUREAUCRACY MUST BE REPRESSED! ANY SABOTAGE OF INTERPLANETARY BUREAUCRACY MUST BE REPRESSED! ANY SABOTAGE OF INTERPLANETARY BUREAUCRACY MUST BE REPRESSED!
POTËMKIN HAS SMALL ROCKETS IN HIS HOOFS!
BUT WHEN WILL ALL OF THIS STOP?
SHWISHH...
THE END OF THE DREAM...

TO BE CONTINUED...

JUNE 2050

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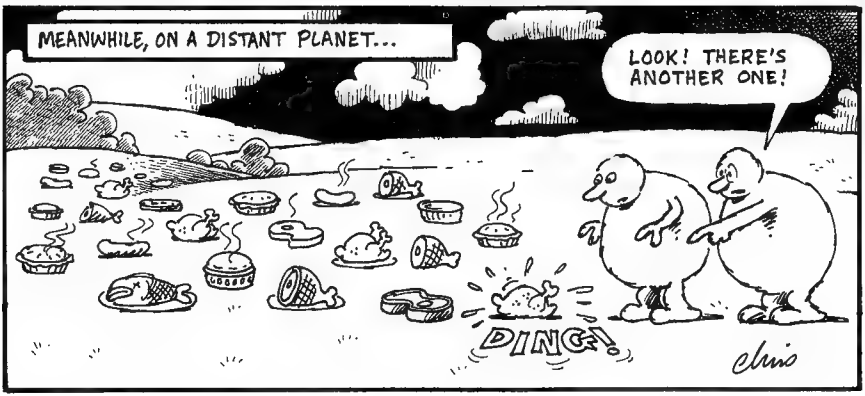
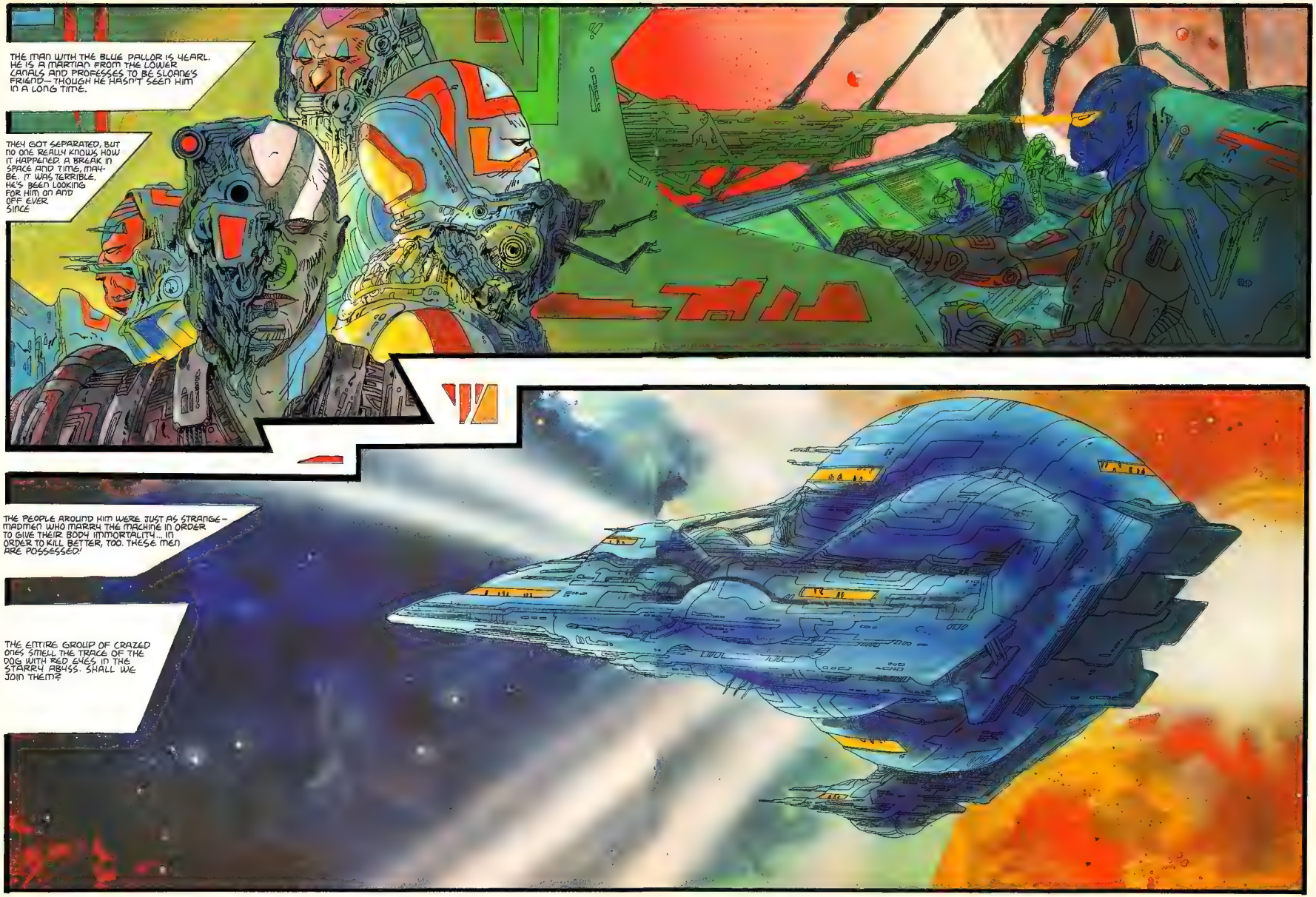
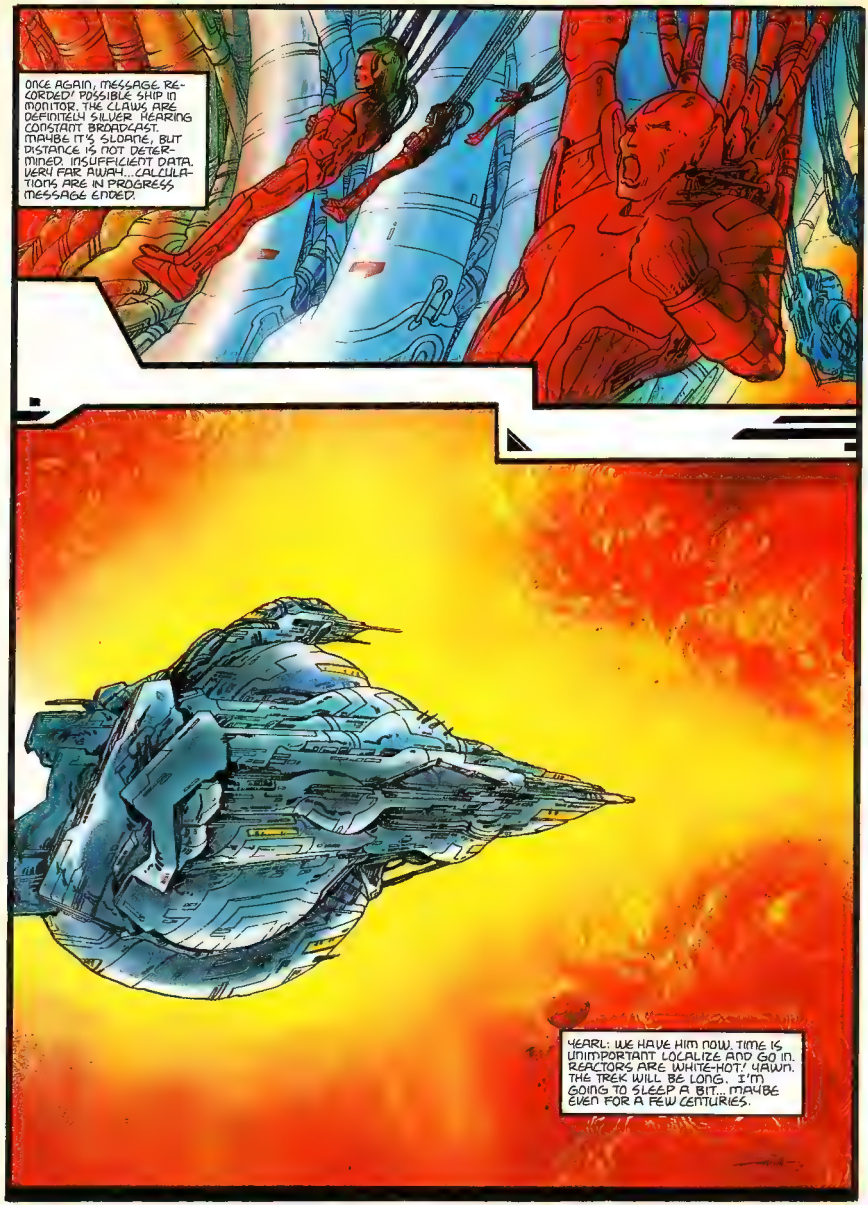


SALAMMBO II

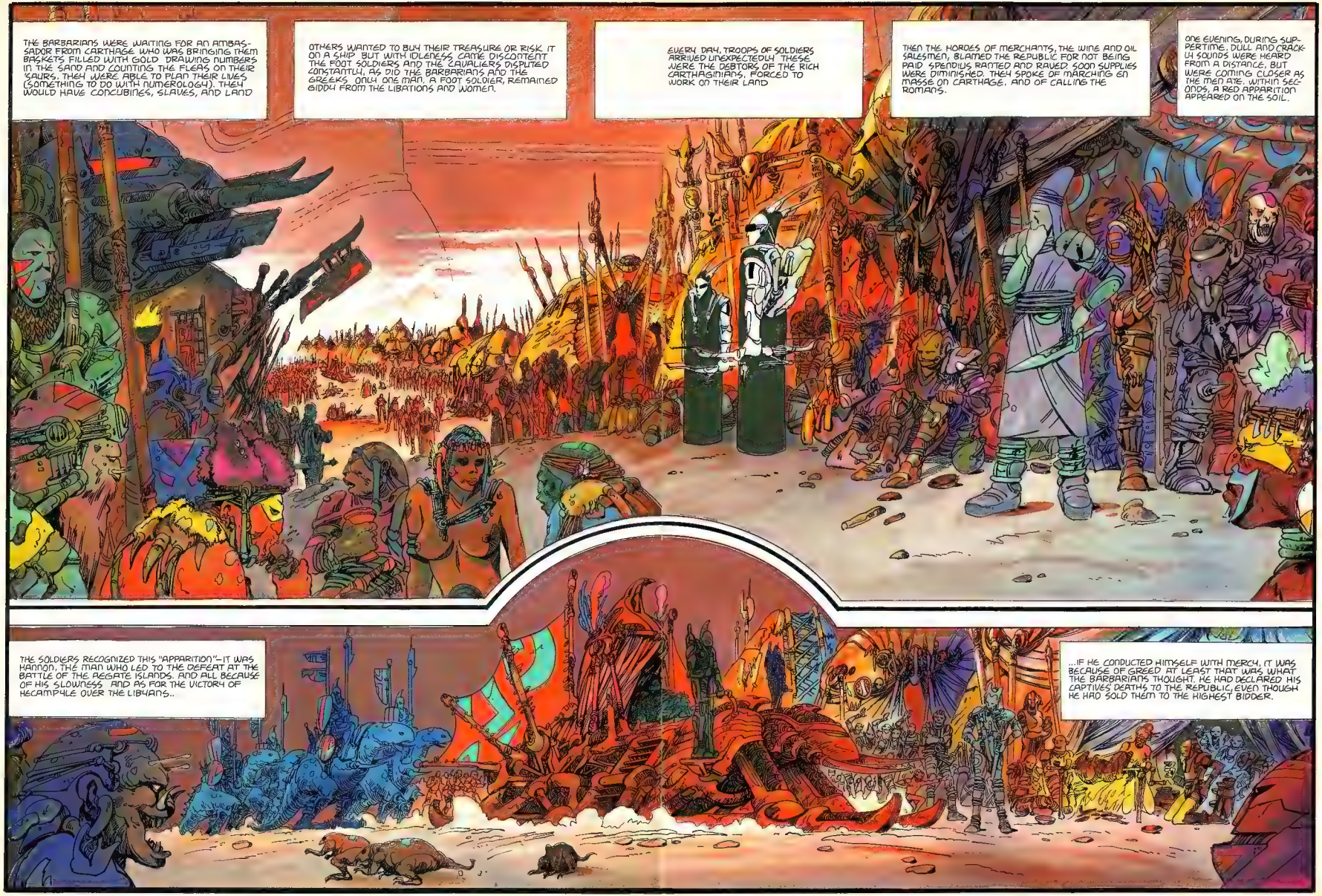
BY PHILIPPE DRUILLET
ADAPTED FROM
GUSTAVE FLAUBERT'S
SALAMMBO.

SLOANE, FROM FAR-OFF IN THE HEAVENS, HAS PERCEIVED THE IMAGE OF SALAMMBO ON THE SCREEN OF HIS COMPUTER. HE IMMEDIATELY RETURNED TO CARTHAGE, WHICH WAS FOUNDED IN THE INFINITY OF TIME. IN HIS TIME, HE HAD BECOME A MERCENARY AND FOUGHT WITH THE ARMY THAT HAD FOUGHT FOR HAMILCAR, THE GREAT CARTHAGINIAN GENERAL. THESE ARE THE SAME MERCENARIES THAT ARE STILL WAITING FOR THE GOLD THAT WAS PROMISED TO THEM BY THEIR "EMPLOYERS." (BUT, OF COURSE, THAT GOLD ISN'T COMING.)
THIS WAIT NOW BRINGS US TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE NOVEL BY MR. FLAUBERT, WHO KNOWS HOW TO TELL A GREAT (YET OFTEN COMPLEX) STORY. SALAMMBO HAS CHANGED HIS JOURNAL, BUT HIS EPIC CONTINUES. .


THE MAN WITH THE BLUE PALLOR IS YEARL. HE IS A MARTIAN FROM THE LOWER CANALS AND PROFESSES TO BE SLOANE'S FRIEND—THOUGH HE HASN'T SEEN HIM IN A LONG TIME.
THEY GOT SEPARATED, BUT NO ONE REALLY KNOWS HOW IT HAPPENED. A BREAK IN SPACE AND TIME, MAYBE. IT WAS TERRIBLE. HE'S BEEN LOOKING FOR HIM ON AND OFF EVER SINCE
THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM WERE JUST AS STRANGE— MADMEN WHO MARRY THE MACHINE IN ORDER TO GIVE THEIR BODY IMMORTALITY... IN ORDER TO KILL BETTER, TOO. THESE MEN ARE POSSESSED!
THE ENTIRE GROUP OF CRAZED ONES SMELL THE TRACE OF THE DOG WITH RED EYES IN THE STARRY ABYSS. SHALL WE JOIN THEM?


ONCE AGAIN, MESSAGE RECORDED! POSSIBLE SHIP IN MONITOR. THE CLAWS ARE DEFINITELY SILVER. HEARING CONSTANT BROADCAST. MAYBE IT'S SLOANE, BUT DISTANCE IS NOT DETERMINED. INSUFFICIENT DATA. VERY FAR AWAY... CALCULATIONS ARE IN PROGRESS MESSAGE ENDED.
YEARL: WE HAVE HIM NOW. TIME IS UNIMPORTANT. LOCALIZE AND GO IN. REACTORS ARE WHITE-HOT! YAWN. THE TREK WILL BE LONG. I'M GOING TO SLEEP A BIT... MAYBE EVEN FOR A FEW CENTURIES.

SILLA, THE SACRED CITY. AT NIGHTTIME THE GODS SHOW THEIR FACES IN THE STONE OF THE RAMPARTS. IN THE MORNING THEY DISAPPEAR. BACK AND FORTH THEY GO, AND IT HAS BEEN THAT WAY FROM ANCIENT TIMES UNTIL TODAY. THE WORLD OF THE STAR IS SO OLD.


THE BARBARIANS WERE WAITING FOR AN AMBASSADOR FROM CARTHAGE WHO WAS BRINGING THEM BASKETS FILLED WITH GOLD. DRAWING NUMBERS IN THE SAND AND COUNTING THE FLEAS ON THEIR SOLDIERS, THEY WERE ABLE TO PLAN THEIR LIVES (SOMETHING TO DO WITH NUMEROLOGY). THEY WOULD HAVE CONCUBINES, SLAVES, AND LAND
OTHERS WANTED TO BUY THEIR TREASURE OR RISK IT ON A SHIP. BUT WITH IDLENESS CAME DISCONTENT. THE FOOT SOLDIERS AND THE CAVALIERS DISPUTED CONSTANTLY, AS DID THE BARBARIANS AND THE GREEKS. ONLY ONE MAN, A FOOT SOLDIER, REMAINED GIDDY FROM THE LIBATIONS AND WOMEN.
EVERY DAY, TROOPS OF SOLDIERS ARRIVED UNEXPECTEDLY. THESE WERE THE DEBTORS OF THE RICH CARTHAGINIANS, FORCED TO WORK ON THEIR LAND
THEN THE HORDES OF MERCHANTS, THE WINE AND OIL SALESMEN, BLAMED THE REPUBLIC FOR NOT BEING PAID. SPENDIUS RANTED AND RAVED. GOOD SUPPLIES WERE DIMINISHED. THEY SPOKE OF MARCHING EN MASSE ON CARTHAGE, AND OF CALLING THE ROMANS.
ONE EVENING, DURING SUPPERTIME, DULL AND CRACKLY SOUNDS WERE HEARD FROM A DISTANCE, BUT WERE COMING CLOSER AS THE MEN ATE. WITHIN SECONDS, A RED APPARITION APPEARED ON THE SOIL.
THE SOLDIERS RECOGNIZED THIS "APPARITION"—IT WAS HANNON, THE MAN WHO LED TO THE DEFEAT AT THE BATTLE OF THE EGATE ISLANDS. AND ALL BECAUSE OF HIS SLOWNESS. AND AS FOR THE VICTORY OF HECAMPYLE OVER THE LIBYANS..
...IF HE CONDUCTED HIMSELF WITH MERCY, IT WAS BECAUSE OF GREED. AT LEAST THAT WAS WHAT THE BARBARIANS THOUGHT. HE HAD DECLARED HIS CAPTIVES' DEATHS TO THE REPUBLIC, EVEN THOUGH HE HAD SOLD THEM TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER.

WHEN HE FOUND A GOOD PLACE FROM WHICH TO LECTURE THE SOLDIERS, HE MADE A SIGN. THE WHISPERING STOPPED AND HANNON, SUPPORTED BY TWO SLAVES, PLACED HIS FEET ON THE GROUND AND STAGGERED TO THE SITE.
TO BE CONTINUED...

MY VAMPIRES: A MEMOIR

The Ds were a banquet, and I took in the feast. Having sampled Deon's cadaverous flesh, which was already turning as gray as Shopwell steak ("Read to him," Mme. D had ordered.), and having nibbled at Christopher, I sharpened my knife for Helena (twenty-one, played by Mia Farrow). I stalked her through my imagination for the rest of the evening, surprising her in sunrooms, startling her beneath the garden's snaky vines. Her eyes would slowly rise from their habitual droop. I would rise with them.

In my rowdy fancy, I touched her breasts.

"Why, David," she said, dissolving me with a yawn. My translucent fingers melted and, adjusting her blouse, she forgot about me.

"Since you're coming to my room . . . ," clicked in my brain like a dress being unsnapped. I prowled through the garden after all were asleep. Leaves did all the things leaves do at night: crinkle, crunch, tiptoe after you. Trees forgot their manners and pretended they were in a Disney movie. The bark grew bite, branches clicked their Fu Manchu fingernails. My fancy developed fangs. The stairs kept one step ahead of me. The halls yawned. As my eyes grew used to shadows, the dark hitched up its pants and trundled off to the other side of the room.

When I finally crept into Helena's bedroom—the half-opened door hinted at welcome—she was sitting among her covers waiting for me. The rabbit had chased the fox in the fox's lair. Foxy Helena! waiting for me to slide into her lap. Perfect dalliance. The bedsprings didn't even creak.

I woke at dawn with a pain in my wrist. Helena lay next to me, propped on her elbow, watching.

"What time is it?" I asked to escape her attention. The hairs on the back of my neck snapped to attention. Beads of sweat marched down my spine.

"Early," she said, "and you should go back to your room now."

I tossed off the covers and slipped from the bed. After fumbling on the floor for my pants and struggling into them, I leaned over to kiss her. She ducked.

"Come back tonight," she whispered, "for more."

In the hallway, I noticed that my right forearm was spattered with dried blood. Once outside in the light, I examined my arm. There was a dried blood clot on my wrist. I licked the spot and rubbed it with my handkerchief, finding two neat slits. Razor cuts. If they had been the marks of particularly long canines, I would have been more terrified than I was. Slave to convention, I knew that vampires used canines to bite. Dangerous pedantry. What if—but I suspected Helena had only licked up the blood and not done any serious sucking.

Back in my room, I packed. I could never understand why in horror stories the victim always stayed in the thirsty count's castle after discovering the ghastly secret. But fear of the supernatural is hard to sustain in daylight. And I discovered that fascination with the mysterious could be stronger than terror. After all, there was nothing uncanny about my vampire. All she needed was a good psychoanalyst.

Nevertheless, in town that afternoon, I bought a small crucifix on a chain to hang around my neck. Nevertheless, I bought cloves of garlic, which I munched—horrible stuff, no wonder vampires hate it—before bed. It made me nauseated. I spent the night over the toilet bowl.

Having successfully avoided Helena for two days, I began to suspect the cross was a powerful charm and Satan was frustratedly lurking about. Had it not worked, I think I would have chosen living death to more garlic. I was good material for a vampire.

Twice I started to ask Christopher about Helena's nasty habit, but I always drew back from the subject out of delicacy. On the third night after I'd slept with her, she came to my room and stood in the door in a long translucent nightgown, damp from her walk through the garden from one house to another. In the places where the cloth touched her body, her pink flesh shone through.

by David Black
Illustrated by Randall Enos

"I've been waiting for you two nights," she cooed. "Are you afraid of me?"

"Yes," I said.

I fingered the cross that hung from my neck.

"Didn't you enjoy it?" she asked.

"Which?"

"Making love to me?"

"You have strange habits," I said.

"It makes it more exciting." She stepped into the room and closed the door behind her.

"I'd rather you left," I said, trying to keep my voice from quavering.

"Wouldn't you like to try it again?" She sat down on the bed.

I was paralyzed. When I opened my mouth to scream, dust puffed out. Terrifyingly, I was aroused by the erotic prospect and when she took my wrist, didn't—perhaps couldn't—object. My arm had gone numb. Around her neck hung not a crucifix but a razor blade on a gold chain. I watched her slit my flesh with the same cold anguish I've watched nurses insert needles when giving me some necessary shot. The whole thing was humiliating as though I were being raped, when I wanted to be raping.

The blood oozed out. She licked it up. After a while, the wound clotted. She lay on the bed next to me. Slowly I slipped my hands under her nightgown and undressed her. As though it were the most natural thing in the world to embrace your vampire, I made love to her. When I woke the following morning, I was confused. I washed off my wrist. Although terror had not been able to drive me away, confusion did. By nine, I was waiting for the train to Paris.

If I hadn't met Helena again within the month, I probably would have returned to her. It's hard to leave mysteries unsolved. I wandered around Paris as though I'd started a yawn at the D's that I hadn't been able to finish. When I went to the Opera for *Le Sacre du Printemps*, I saw Helena eating an ice cream bonbon outside a stall. When I escaped from an evil afternoon into the Louvre, I found her in a tiny room examining Delacroix's *Orphan in a Storm*.

"What are you doing here?" I demanded.

She blinked and pretended not to recognize me. I wandered to the window and stared down at the pedestrians while trying to decide what to do next. Upon turning back to her, I discovered she had transformed herself into a rather plain young woman who wore her hair in the same style and had droopy eyelids like Helena, but who was not at all my vampire.

That night I took a train to Geneva, but chased by her reflection in a shop window dashed to Montreux where she turned up on the stairs leading down from the station. I rushed into the mountains and like a feather settling on asphalt came to rest in Chateau d'Oex, a village near Gstaad. I was told David Niven had a house there and hired a double to stroll through the streets throwing autograph hunters off his scent. Everyone needs a doppelgänger.

After renting a two-room apartment overlooking a cow-pocked meadow, I convinced myself that I was going to stay. When I found Helena sitting at the station restaurant the following afternoon, I gave myself up to my messy fate and burrowed into a dark cafe, which started pleasantly rocking after too many scotches.

Noon: when Christopher sauntered into the room, I was so glad to find my hallucination had left me, it seemed unimportant that the model for the hallucination was here herself.

"She is, isn't she?" I asked after he had sat down.

"Of course," he drawled. "We always come here in October. Off-season. Didn't I tell you that? If you wanted to escape her, I should think you would've tried to avoid us. How are your wrists?"

He grinned.

I gathered my drunken dignity together like a man picking up an armful of kittens.

"Healing," I said. "Thank you."

"You shouldn't be afraid of her," he said. "She's harmless."

"I wasn't expecting to get rabies," I said.

"Why'd you run away? We enjoyed you so much. Poor Deon has no one to read to him now."

"Put an ad in the *Herald-Tribune*."

"We have," Christopher said.

"New dinner for Helena?" I asked.

"She hasn't finished what's on her plate." Enfolding my hand in his and leaning across the table, he added, "She'll be happy to know you're here."

"Yum yum!" I said.

In bed that night, I waited for the scratching at the window. When nothing happened except dawn, I was almost disappointed. I dribbled off to sleep and dreamed of Helena with a furry face and huge fangs. A drop of blood formed at the point of a tooth and dropped. Just as it splashed, I woke. Someone was lightly knocking on the door. At least, she hadn't slid through the keyhole as a mist.

Slipping into my bathrobe, I opened the door. She entered, passing me without a glance. On the balcony, her back to me, she asked:

"Do you always sleep so late?"

"Nightmares," I explained.

"Are you bothered by them?"

"When they knock on my door," I said.

Her smile led me from the dungeon to a sunny execution.

"I guess I wanted to see you again," I added, ungraciously.

"I guess you did," she said. "Nice view. Have you climbed yet?"

"No."

"Would you join me this morning?"

While I dressed, she sat on the balcony, humming and touching her hair. Outside, in front of the post office, we passed six girls from La Cataracte, one of the town's boarding schools.

"Ugly, aren't they," Helena said.

"I thought one was pretty," I said.

"Which one?"

I pointed her out. A blond with the wide-eyed look of someone who'd just been splashed in the face with a pailful of water.

"Predictable," Helena said.

For the first half hour of our hike, we didn't talk. At one place, where a name in careful script and the date 1867 was carved into the rock, she stopped and pointed.

"Amazing," I said.

"Banal," she corrected.

The path struggled up beneath the leafy tangle like a limbed snake upon which we rode. The air shimmered green. We climbed stiles, loped across pastures in mysteriously good spirits, peered in upon the silent hulking gondolas of the teleferique in their mountain-top station. Outside the building, Helena threw her arms around me and kissed me on the lips.

"I want you," she said. When I hestiated, she added, "There's no one here."

I might have been more comfortable if there had been. The only way to make love to Helena in safety was in public. Maybe not. She'd probably ask someone in the crowd to run down to the corner and buy her some new razor blades.

We slipped to the ground. When she took my wrist, I pulled away.

"You can't refuse me," she said.

"Why?" I asked. "Because I'm already under your spell? Half-vampire?"

She laughed.

"I don't know," she said. "Are you going to become a vampire?"

"Isn't that what happens when a vampire sucks your blood?"

"We're all corrupt in different ways. I'm sure you're original enough to discover your own vice."

"All my vices are petty."

"Of course," she said. "You're not an aristocrat."

"And one of my petty vices is selfishness. I don't want to give you pleasure."

"And if I take it?"

"I'm wearing a cross," I said.

"Don't be absurd," she said.

"I'll drive a stake through your heart."

"Murder isn't a petty vice," she laughed. "Yes, but that's what you are. I can tell it from your eyes. You're a murderer searching for a victim. But, David, I'm not your victim."

"You're sure?" I asked.

"Absolutely."

"How can you tell?"

"Because," she explained, "you are *my* victim."

Carefully, as though she were lifting a dandelion puff, she took my wrist. This time she didn't use a razor. When she bent down and drew back her lips, I felt as though her breath had exploded the tiny white filaments through my veins. Make a wish! As she sank her teeth into my flesh, I shivered and closed my eyes. Her quick tongue licking my wrist tickled voluptuously. It was like sliding into a pool of oil. The pain, after she drew away, was like a dropped match, the shuddering gasp of the explosion, the piercing flame.

I didn't make love to her, for sex seemed something in miniature compared to the sensuality that held me suspended like a fly in Jell-o.

"My great-great-grandfather," she said, "made one of his servants pregnant. When she brought him the child and demanded compensation, he had the kid cooked and served to him. The woman, tied to a chair at his table, watched him eat their son. She waited two years for revenge. She found my great-great-grandfather pinned under a fallen tree in his woods. Slowly, she sliced off his living flesh and ate it uncooked as he watched. When his brother found them, he was squatting next to the quivering carcass of my great-great-grandfather. The only parts of his body left intact were the soles of his feet and the flesh on his face."

When she stopped speaking, I was not sure she had really told the story. I remembered it as though it had been a dream. In my imagination I had been the great-great-grandfather and Helena had been the woman I'd wronged. We climbed down the mountain as we had climbed up. In silence.

In front of the post office, we again saw the six girls from La Cataracte. The pretty one who was about sixteen held Christopher's cap and was waving it in front of his face. He, pretending despair, wailed and snatched at it unsuccessfully. Finally, after dashing at her, he grabbed her round the waist and was wrestling his cap away when Helena shouted, "Christopher!"

He released the girl.

"We're going for a drink," Helena said. "Would you like to join us?"

Christopher bowed mockingly.

"Enchanted," he said.

The girl, eyes white, couldn't tear herself away.

Helena called to her:

"Little girl, give my brother his cap and go home."

This broke the magic. Dissolving into a frenzy of giggles, she dashed into the circle of her friends who had watched the scene with voracious expectancy—tight little grins and hunched little bodies—and who now fluttered down upon her as though she were a piece of bread thrown to them. Clucking and pecking, they swirled up the street.

That night, I went to Helena's room in the hotel. Through the closed door, she asked, "Who is it?"

When I told her, she said slowly, "No, David, I don't want to see you. I'm busy. Go play with Christopher. I'm sure he's lonely."

I went downstairs into the street, feeling light-headed. Helena's come-hither was broken. I suppose once I'd become a willing victim, she lost interest in me. Having visited and enjoyed Hell, I was just as happy to be surfacing. By giving myself up to evil, I had escaped. The pleasures of vice seduce us while we're passive. Only when we become actively depraved and irrevocably damned, does Satan turn the screws.

"Not necessarily," Christopher said, when I explained this to him. "Vice is its own reward. For example, tonight Helena has the joy of corrupting a sixteen-year-old child."

When I stared, he enlightened me.

"Remember the school girl who stole my cap? Andrea? Lovely name, don't you think? What's the matter? Are you jealous?"

"Disgusted," I said.

"Are you sure?"

"I'm delighted to have escaped your sister."

"I didn't mean that," Christopher smiled. "Wouldn't you like your chance with Andrea?"

"No."

He repeated, "Are you sure?"

"Aren't you jealous?" I said. "Weren't you anxious to get your hands on her?"

"I may still get my chance. And if I don't, I have ways of getting back at Helena. But, you see, she's always taken my toys away from me. Think of what she did to you."

"Was I your toy?" I asked.

"Weren't you?"

"My tastes don't run in that direction," I said.

Christopher again laughed.

"You keep talking as though it were up to you," he said.

"It is."

"Maybe so," he said. "At least, it makes one comfortable to think that, doesn't it?"

"You're as bad as she is," I said.

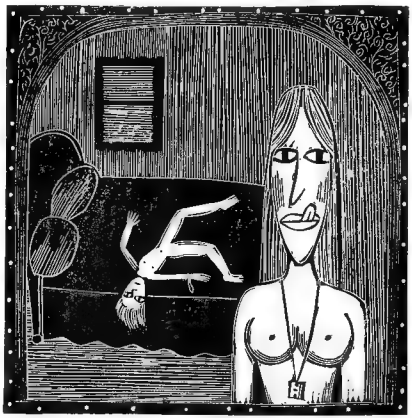
"It has nothing to do with bad or good," Christopher said.

"You disgust me," I said.

"Everything seems to disgust you tonight."

"Not everything. Only the Ds."

"But you didn't have to come to Chateau d'Oex," he said. "You knew we'd be coming here, didn't you."



"No," I said, suddenly not sure about that. Maybe I'd heard about their plans and forgotten. Being there together had to be more than coincidence. It seemed arranged. By whom? My devilish subconscious.

"We fascinate you, don't we?" Christopher said. "You could leave tomorrow. No? See, you're corrupt, too. It's much easier to recognize it and stop talking like a minister."

"Was I corrupt before I met you?" I asked.

"Yes," he said. "Merely inexperienced."

"And the school girl?"

"No one is corrupted who doesn't want to be. She didn't have to come here tonight. It was difficult. She had to sneak away."

"But she doesn't know . . . ."

"David, you're beginning to bore me." He yawned. "Go away now. Go away."

On my way from bar to apartment, I passed the hotel. I stopped and stared up at it. Abruptly, I entered and ran up the stairs to Helena's room, where I pounded on the door.

"Yes," murmured Helena after a while.

"Open the door," I demanded.

"Go home," she sighed.

When I refused, she unlatched the door. I pushed my way into the room. Helena stood naked in front of me. On the bed, draped over the eiderdown like a crumpled nightgown lay the small white naked body of the girl. Andrea. Her eyes were open, but unseeing. Her wrist was bloodstained. Helena's tongue darted out and caught a drop of blood that hung from her upper lip.

"Yes?" she asked.

I brushed past her and knelt by the girl.

"Are you all right?" I asked her.

She stared blankly at me, then closed her eyes. Helena drifted next to me.

"Would you like her next?" she asked.

Ignoring her, I dressed the girl. Helena leaned over me and brushed her lips across the back of my neck. I shivered.

"Lie down with me," she whispered.

I helped the girl to the door.

"Perhaps you and Christopher should leave town," I said. "I'm going to tell the headmaster of the school about this."

"Mr. Plum?" Helena said. "Give him my best. He's a family friend."

Mr. Plum was awake when I brought Andrea to the school. Dressed in a quilted purple robe, he answered the door himself. After I explained what had happened, he sat beside the girl on the couch in his office and asked her if she was all right.

She nodded.

"Miss Read will put you to bed," he said. "Is there anything you want to tell me, anything you want?"

She shook her head no.

After she had gone, he sank into his desk chair and snapped on the lamp, which cast a reddish glow on his chubby face. Because he was silent, I asked:

"What are you going to do?"

"About a bad dream?"

"About the Ds."

"How are they?"

"How do you know them?"

"We won't get anywhere by asking questions without giving answers," said Mr. Plum.

"Then maybe you'll answer my first question," I said.

"I'm not going to do anything. First, the Ds are powerful. Second, who is going to believe in vampires?"

"You did."

"Yes," he sighed. "But then they've been coming to this village for a long time, and I've gotten to know the family."

"They could be committed," I said.

"I suppose they could." He glanced at the scabs on my wrists.

"Did they tie you down?"

"What?"

"You mean you let her drink your blood?" He raised the eyebrows over his piggy little eyes. "I wonder what the doctors would make of that?"

Mr. Plum steepled his hands together and stared at me over the tips of his fingers.

"How well do you know Helena?" I asked.

"Well enough to let my wrists heal before I said anything to the police," he said.

"Your wrists seem to be in good shape," I said.

He turned his hands over and stared at the wrists.

"Yes," he said. "But now and then . . . ." He didn't finish.

"What about Andrea?" I asked.

"She had a bad dream. She's a difficult child. Unstable. Maybe she bit her own wrists or gashed them with something."

"I didn't ask about her parents."

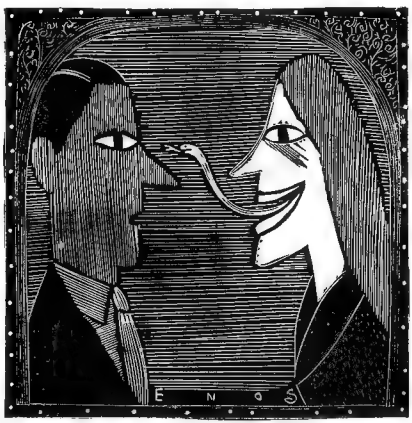
"I don"t know What-about-her," he snapped. "What about you? What about me? Do you want me to call in a priest and exorcise the devils? Are you waiting for the grand finale and good triumphant? Do you want me to rouse the townsfolk and drive stakes through Helena's heart? My heart? Your heart? Everyone doesn't go to Heaven. Some of us don't even want to."

"But what . . . ."

"But what," he interrupted, mocking me. "But what . . . . But what . . . . If the girl doesn't want it, she won't seek it out anymore. We're all traumatized. She's just had a more interesting trauma than most children. It's so unbelievable, she'll probably think she invented it. By the time she goes to college, she'll make herself mysterious with it. What do you want to do? If you call the police, I'll tell them you did it."

I stood up.

"Good night," said Mr. Plum "Happy dreams."



Christopher was right. I couldn't leave. I wasn't sure if I stayed out of a bad conscience to see what I could do to protect Andrea or out of lust or out of despair. When I saw Helena in the post office the next morning, she smiled and asked:

"Sleep well last night, David? Or are you still having your nightmares?"

"I don't have my nightmares when I'm asleep," I said.

"I hear you met Plum," she said.

She took my arm and walked with me toward the cafe.

"What do you think of him?" she asked.

"Look, Helena. Why don't you leave Andrea alone."

"David, don't be a clown."

"Come with me to Paris."

"No, David. I'm not that interested in you anymore."

"You can't be convinced?"

She shook her head no.

"Shall we take another walk?"

We wandered down the path to the stream, past a row of small chalets, each with their cozy name-plaques pinned to the wall near the door like a medal. After zig-zagging down the dirt trail to the bank, we sat on the grass to watch the water rumble by like a foaming subway train. I put my arm around Helena's waist, reaching a little farther to grab her wrist, which I yanked up behind her back.

"You see," I explained, "one advantage of being corrupt is you don't have to worry about scruples. Now, tonight you are going to have an irrestible urge to leave Chateau d'Oex." When Helena said nothing, I jerked her twisted arm up until she squawked. "Irrestible urge," I repeated.

"Yes," she hissed. She winced more—I think—from humiliation than from pain.

"Promise," I said.

"Yes, yes." She closed her eyes as though she were slamming doors in her brain. "I promise."

I let go of her wrist, which she plucked off the grass and stuck carefully in her pocket.

"How do you know I'll keep my word?" she asked. Her voice betrayed no jagged edges. She sounded as if she were asking if I thought it would rain tonight.

"You're an aristocrat," I said.

She smiled. A tiny snake stuck its head out of her mouth and smiled. A flea squeezed through the snake's bony jaws and smiled.

"Because you don't want me to hurt you anymore," I added.

"Yes," she agreed, "there's that."

"What a pleasant walk," I said, standing and stretching. "We must do it again sometime. If you're still around, that is."

"Will you come home with me?" she wanted to know once we had climbed back up to the town and were standing in front of her hotel.

"So you can have your revenge?" I asked.

"It's only sporting," she said.

Her eyelids did what I had come to expect when I knew evil thoughts were riding round her imagination like painted horses on a merry-go-round. She tested one, climbed on another, and curving toward the insect-like mechanical arm, reached for the brass ring.

"Come," she murmured. I was already strung out on the rack. The knife on the pendulum tickled my belly like a feather. The pit was a public phone booth in Manhattan. When I lifted the receiver, it turned into a kitten. When I tried to hang the animal up, turning my hand into a paw. the fur grew round my wrist, Helena slipped a leash over my neck and led me through the Tuileries as Gerard de Nerval had walked his pet lobster through the Luxembourg Gardens. "Come," she repeated.

Before going to Chateau d'Oex, I had written a panicky letter to my sister. Vampires romped through the pages. I wanted my sister to reassure me that demons lived only in books and on screens and in vigorous imaginations. She complied by sending me an article from the *New York Post*, October 4, 1970.

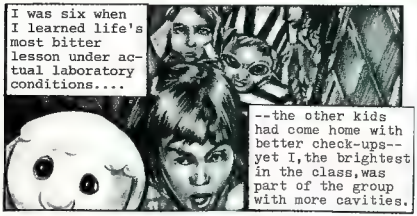
Vampires Are In Season

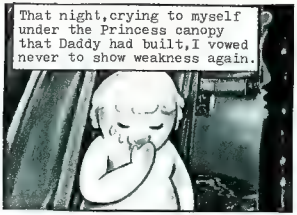
London (AP) Police arrested Allan Farrant, 24, when they found him prowling through London's Highgate Cemetery with a flashlight, a crucifix emblazoned with a magic emblem and a sharp wooden stake. Farrant told the judge he was hunting vampires and intended to dispatch them in accepted fashion by driving the stake through the heart. The judge found hunting vampires within the law and dismissed the case.

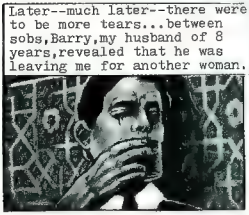
January and February excerpts of My Vampires *are from a novel in progress.*

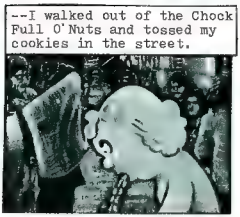
David Black's fifth novel, Murder at the Met, *will be published this fall by The Dial Press.*

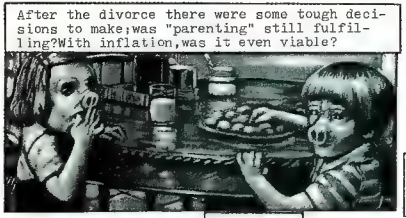
AN UNMARRIED PILLSBURY DOUGHPERSON

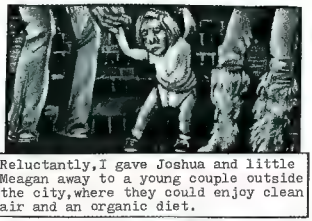

I was six when I learned life's most bitter lesson under actual laboratory conditions....
--the other kids had come home with better check-ups--yet I,the brightest in the class,was part of the group with more cavities.

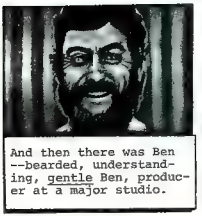


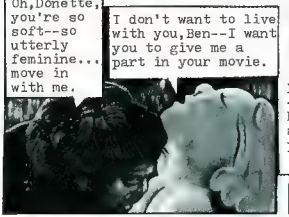

Later--much later--there were to be more tears...between sobs,Barry,my husband of 8 years,revealed that he was leaving me for another woman.

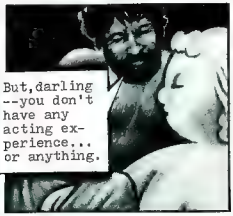


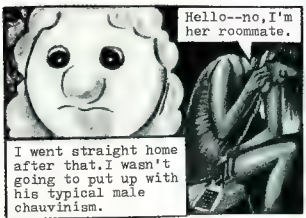

After the divorce there were some tough decisions to make;was "parenting" still fulfilling?With inflation,was it even viable?

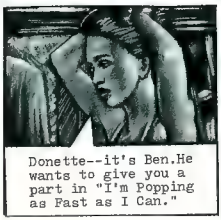

Reluctantly,I gave Joshua and little Meagan away to a young couple outside the city,where they could enjoy clean air and an organic diet.




Oh,Donette, you're so soft--so utterly feminine... move in with me.
I don't want to live with you,Ben--I want you to give me a part in your movie.







©1983 Rod Kierkegaard, Jr.

I'M AGE

WHEN I FIGURE THINGS OUT, I'LL BE SMART ONLY IF I REMEMBER THEM.

SO WHEN I SAW A FALLEN TREE, BROKEN BRANCHES EVERYWHERE, SURELY A THING OF MANY MEMBERS, I THOUGHT...
© JEFFREY JONES 1985

I MUST REMEMBER THAT A THING DISMEMBERED COULD BE REDISMEMBERED IF ONLY IT COULD BE DISDISMEMBERED. ...OR MAYBE RE-MEMBERED?

HMM, MAYBE I BETTER JUST DISREMEMBER THAT.

I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT **MONEY**. TAKE ME TO A CLUB AND I'LL PAY YOU **TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS** FOR THE NIGHT. THE IDEA OF **PAYING** FOR A MAN **AMUSES** ME.

I TOOK HER TO THE **MUDD CLUB**—A PLACE THAT HAS SEEN **BETTER DAYS**. LUBNA AND I USED TO GO THERE OFTEN TO SELL **BAD COCAINE** TO THE CUSTOMERS.

RANXEROX IN NEW YORK

LAST WE READ, RANX WAS "HACKING" IN THE STREETS OF NEW YORK. HIS LATEST FARE, A RICH-BITCH, SEDUCED HIM INTO TAKING HER TO THE HOT CLUBS.

HELLO, RANX! WHERE DID YOU GET **THIS** FILLYZ?

RA, BABY!

THOSE ARE MY **FRIENDS**.!

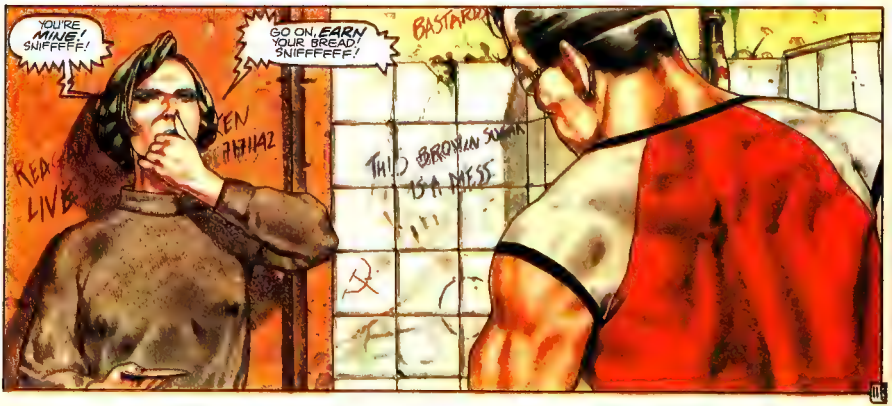
YES! WHAT **FUN**!

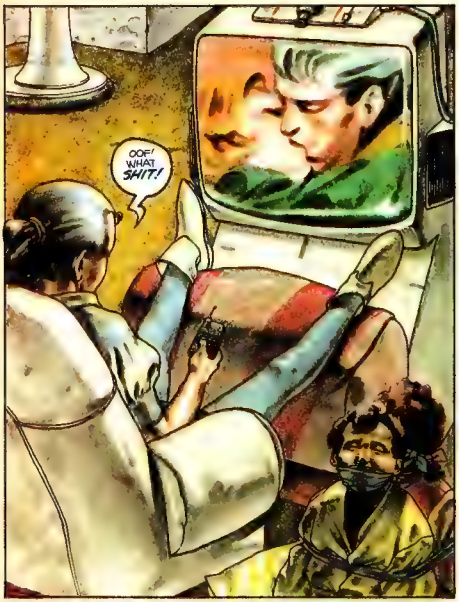
SO, AREN'T YOU GOING TO INTRODUCE US TO YOUR GIRLZ SHE'S OBVIOUSLY FROM PARK AVENUE.
HANDS OFF!

LISTEN, RANX... I SWEAR I NEVER SEEN AN ASS LIKE THAT IN MY WHOLE LIFE! NOT SINCE I WAS BORN. I'M TELLIN' YA! I'LL GIVE YOU TWO GRAMS OF COKE IF YOU LET US TAKE A TURN IN HER PANTS EVEN AFTER YOU, IF YOU'D LIKE!
SNIFF!

WHY, I'LL BREAK YOUR...
SHUT UP, RANX. THIS SITUATION EXCITES ME.

OKAY, FRIEND. SHOW ME THE COKE AND WAIT YOUR TURN. RANX AND I ARE GOING TO THE JOHN. WHEN WE'VE FINISHED, I'LL WHISTLE FOR YOU. HAND OVER THE COKE. COME ON, QUICKLY, BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND!
OKAY, BUT NO TRICKS! I'M WAITING BEHIND THE DOOR.


YOU'RE MINE! SNIFFFFF!
GO ON, EARN YOUR BREAD! SNIFFFFFF!
BASTARD!
THIS BROWN SUGAR IS A MESS


OOF! WHAT SHIT!

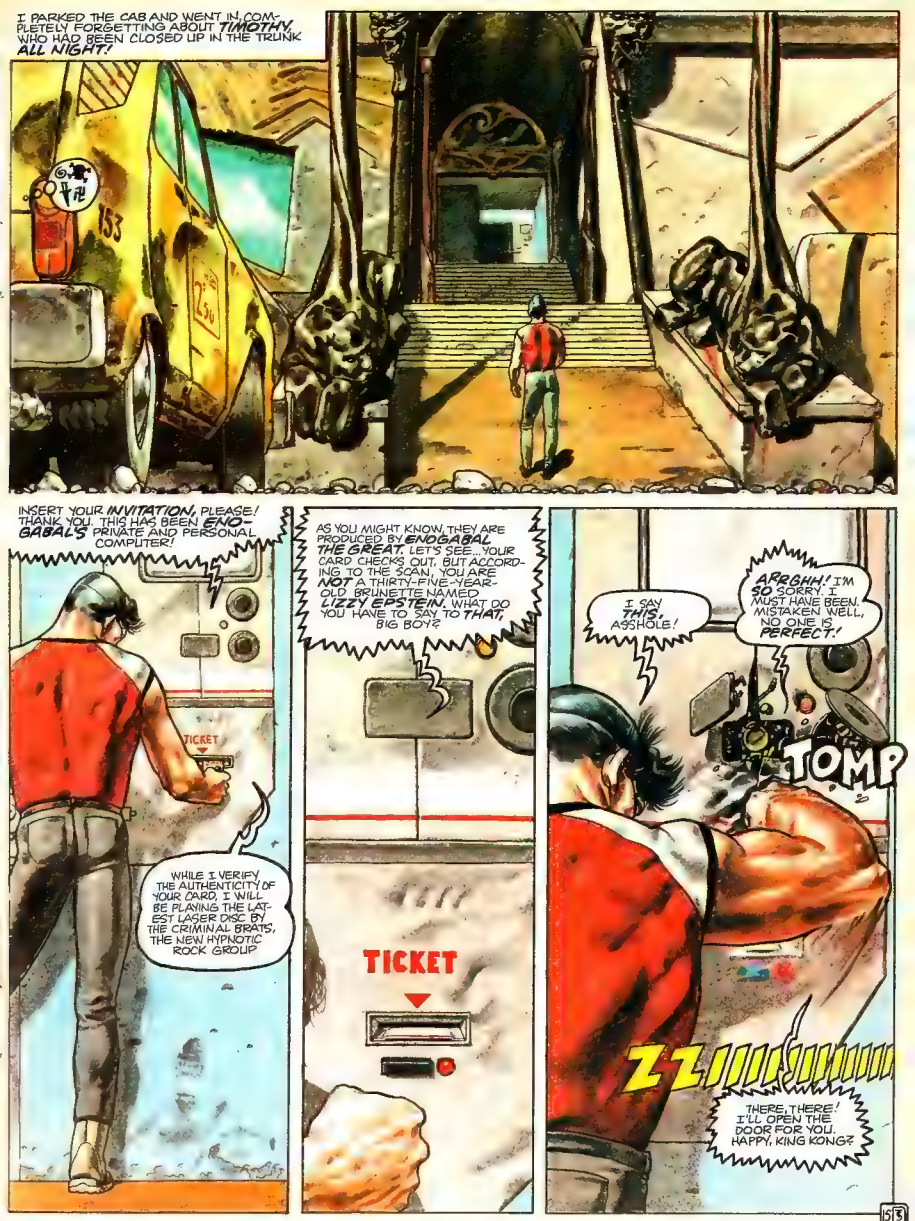
HOW LONG DO YOU THINK IT WILL TAKE?
SNIF!

HEY!
.. ARE YOU GOING...
WHAT ARE YOU? I TOUCH YOUR NIPPLE AND YOU START TO MAKE MUSIC! AND WHAT'S THAT DOOR ON YOUR BACK? YOU'RE A ROBOT, AREN'T YOU? SHIT! I PAID A ROBOT TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS! AND HE'S A PEASANT, TO BOOT!

PEASANT? HOW DARE YOU CALL ME A PEASANT, YOU WHORE!

SHE WANTS YOU NOW. I'VE GOT THE COKE, AND SHE GAVE ME HER BAG. GENEROUS, HUH?
YEAH!
SHIT! FUCKING ROBOT ASS-HOLE!
KRK
WOW! THREE THOUSAND IN CASH! WELL, I CAN QUIT HACKING FOR A WHILE!
ENOCABALL
17 AUG PARTY 10 PM
CREDIT CARD
AND A PARTY INVITATION! I'LL GO.. LUBNA CAN WAIT.
GENTLY, I SAID! GOOD! THAT'S IT!
TAKE IT EASY, BIG ASS!
AAAAAAAHIIAAAIIAH
THE SINGER FROM TONIGHT'S GROUP ISN'T BAD! SHE REMINDS ME OF THE OLD THROBBINGS!

TWENTY MINUTES LATER..
THIS MUST BE IT— LEXINGTON AND 61ST.
HERE I GO!


I PARKED THE CAB AND WENT IN, COMPLETELY FORGETTING ABOUT TIMOTHY, WHO HAD BEEN CLOSED UP IN THE TRUNK ALL NIGHT!
153
INSERT YOUR INVITATION, PLEASE! THANK YOU. THIS HAS BEEN ENOGABAL'S PRIVATE AND PERSONAL COMPUTER!
TICKET
WHILE I VERIFY THE AUTHENTICITY OF YOUR CARD, I WILL BE PLAYING THE LATEST LASER DISC BY THE CRIMINAL BRATS, THE NEW HYPNOTIC ROCK GROUP!
AS YOU MIGHT KNOW, THEY ARE PRODUCED BY ENOGABAL THE GREAT. LET'S SEE... YOUR CARD CHECKS OUT, BUT ACCORDING TO THE SCAN, YOU ARE NOT A THIRTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD BRUNETTE NAMED LIZZY EPSTEIN. WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY TO THAT, BIG BOY?
TICKET
I SAY THIS, ASSHOLE!
TOMP
ARRGHH! I'M SO SORRY. I MUST HAVE BEEN MISTAKEN. WELL, NO ONE IS PERFECT!
ZZ
THERE, THERE! I'LL OPEN THE DOOR FOR YOU, HAPPY, KING KONG?

I THINK THESE FILMS ON NEW YORK ARE ***INTENTIONALLY*** STATIC. FRANKLY, I DON'T THINK MUCH OF THEM. ***ENOUGH ABAL*** NO LONGER KNOWS WHERE ***INVENTIVENESS ENDS*** AND ***STUPIDITY BEGINS***. I LIKED HIS FILM LAST YEAR. REMEMBER? THE SERIGRAPHIC ENLARGEMENTS OF ***HIS MOTHER'S ASS*** WITH FLUORESCENT COLORS...

ALL THE SAME, HE WAS RIGHT ABOUT ***ONE*** THING. THE SMALLER THE MONITOR, THE MORE ATTENTION IT ATTRACTS. YOU ***HARDLY NOTICE*** THE ***BIG*** ONES.

IT'S TOO STATIC!

?

YEAH, LIKE VIDEO WALLPAPER!

I HELPED MYSELF TO A COUPLE OF GRAMS OF **HEROIN** FOR MY **LITTLE DARLING.** HER LOOMING, THREATENING VOICE **STILL** RESOUNDED IN MY TRANSISTORS. "FOR MY BIRTHDAY, I WANT A **FABULOUS PRESENT.** IF NOT, **I'LL LEAVE YOU!**" WHAT **ELSE** COULD I GET HER?

WASN'T HE THE LEAD IN THE **FRED ASTAIRE** EXTRAVAGANZA WE SAW ON BROADWAY?

...THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIENCE IS CONCENTRATED HERE IN NEW YORK, BUT LACKS THE SPARKLE OF THE EUROPEAN CONNECTION.

RIGHT.

YEAH, YEAH, THAT'S **HIM!** THE MASSACRE AT THE FINALE WAS **SUPER!** YOU KNOW, GLORIA, IF I'D BEEN A BIT CLOSER TO THE STAGE, **I'D** BE DEAD, **TOO.** LET'S GO AND MEET HIM.

HEY, TOM! LOOK! THAT GUY HAS A **RED SCARF** IN HIS POCKET. WHAT DO YOU SAY? SHOULD WE **DO IT TO HIM?**

OKAY!

I WAS UNAWARE THAT IN NEW YORK, GAY MEN WILL WEAR A RED SCARF IN THEIR BACK POCKET IF THEY WANT TO BE FIST FUCKED. NEED I SAY MORE?

WAN' SOME FIST FUCKIN', SWEETHEART?

HEY! WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
RUMBLE
UHHH!
AH!
?
DON'T PAW MY ASS, OKAY?
GOD, HE'S STRONG!
ROK
AGGH!
HEY, MAN. ONLY IN FOR A LITTLE FUN. COME ON, SWEET MEAT.
I'M WARNING YOU...GET OUT OF MY FACE!
GOOD WORK! THOSE SADO-MASOCHISTS ARE SO BORING AND REPETITIVE. WHAT'S YOUR NAME, ANYWAY?
MEZ RAN-XEROX.
TAKE THIS, YOU MOTHER-FUCKER!
TUMP
OKAY, NOW YOU'VE ASKED FOR IT!
AAAIIIRRRRGGHHHURRA!!
COOL OFF, HOT SHIT!
ZZZIIIRRRR
OH, MOTHER MARY
TO BE CONTINUED...

TALES OF THE GALACTIC INN

TOKSATH'S TALE

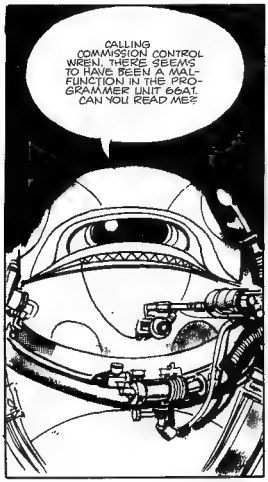
BY JOSÉ MA BEA FONT

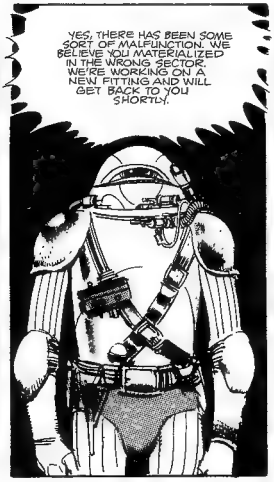
WHAT HO, TOKSATH! YOU TRAITOR! YOU CRAZY THIEF!
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT? I'LL SWALLOW ALMOST ANY SLIME THAT'S FLUNG AT ME, AS LONG AS IT'S NOT AS STALE AS THAT! COME ON... CAN'T YOU STIR UP THOSE OLD LOGGINS OF YOURS AND COME UP WITH SOMETHING ORIGINAL?
ALL WE HAVE LEFT IS OUR BOREDOM, DESERTER
© 79 José Mª BEA FONT

COME ON, TOKSATH! WE'LL BUY YOU DINNER IF YOU TELL US A TALL ONE!
YEAH! ONE OF YOUR REAL LONG DIATRIBES! I HAVEN'T SLEPT IN AGES!
COULD I REQUEST SOMETHING SOOTHING? I FEEL LIKE GIVING BIRTH NOW!
ALL RIGHT, YOU TAVERN SCUM... LISTEN UP!
REMEMBER, MOST OF US HERE AREN'T HUMAN! SO WE CAN'T BLUSH! SO MAKE IT AS RAUNCHY AS YOU LIKE!

"THE MACHINE READ 'MIDDLESEX, 1895,' AND IT WAS CLEAR WE HAD STUMBLED UPON A PLANET THAT WAS INHABITED BY STRANGE BEINGS. ONE OF OUR SCOUTS WAS SENT DOWN IMMEDIATELY."

FLOMP!


CALLING COMMISSION CONTROL WREN. THERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN A MALFUNCTION IN THE PROGRAMMER UNIT 66AT. CAN YOU READ ME?


YES, THERE HAS BEEN SOME SORT OF MALFUNCTION. WE BELIEVE YOU MATERIALIZED IN THE WRONG SECTOR. WE'RE WORKING ON A NEW FITTING AND WILL GET BACK TO YOU SHORTLY.

OUR CALCULATIONS SHOW THAT THIS MALFUNCTION WILL BE CORRECTED IN THREE KRENDOS*. MEANWHILE, IT HAS BEEN ORDERED BY THE SUPREME COMMITTEE THAT YOU MUST NOT FRATERNIZE WITH THE INHABITANTS OF THAT PLANET.
*EQUALS 65 EARTH MINUTES.

MY DEAR, ALLOW ME TO BE THE FIRST TO WISH YOU A HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
YES, IT'S THE PRIVILEGE OF OUR CLASS TO BE ABLE TO CELEBRATE SUCH PLEASANT OCCASIONS FOR DAYS ON END, MY DEAR GLAD-STONE
LOOK, MY SON! THERE'S SOMEONE IN THE GARDEN! BUT WHAT..?
I'LL GO AND SEE, FATHER!
LOOK, IT'S A DINER! THERE WAS A DINER IN THE GARDEN!
AH, THE MINDLESS PSEUDO-SCIENTIFIC DRIVEL THAT THWARTS THE INFANT MIND!
I LOVE IT! "A DINER IN THE GARDEN," HOW QUAINT!
OR MADONA NE PASSANO IA.
HOW DO YOU DO, SIR? SHOULD I GUESS WHO YOU ARE UNDER THERE? UNDOUBTEDLY A FRIEND HERE TO EXPRESS BIRTHDAY GREETINGS!

CLICK TREECLY
I MUST SAY, I DON'T KNOW OF ANY NEIGHBORS THAT LOOK LIKE THAT!
HMMM, AND I WAS SURE IT WAS GOING TO BE LORD DOUGLAS.
I STILL THINK IT'S A CURIOUS PRANK!
IT'S THE SINGLE EYE IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS FACE! THAT'S WHAT FRIGHTENS ME!
I KNEW MY MATCH WOULD FIND ME. YOU WHO SEE MORE WITH THAT ONE EYE THAN HUNDREDS WITH A THOUSAND. COME TO ME NOW
AH, YOU ARE PERFECTION!

I HAVE NEVER MET A MAN LIKE YOU, AND I PROBABLY NEVER WILL. BUT I GUESS ALL THE GIRLS SAY THAT TO YOU.
PAPA! ALINITE JANE IS GETTING FRIENDLY WITH THE DIVER AND I DON'T LIKE IT!
YOU DEGENERATE SCOUNDREL! YOU'RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF A WOMAN WHO CAN'T DISTINGUISH DREAMS FROM REALITY!
AND NOW, OUT WITH YOU! OUT OF MY HOUSE!
TOC!

CRASH
YOU BRUTE! YOU BROKE MY PRIZED COLLECTION! MY FINE JAPANESE VASE COLLECTION! BOSIE!
BOSIE! ATTACK! ATTACK!
ZOOOP
BO BOSIE?!? HE'S DISAPPEARED!
IT'S WITCHCRAFT! HE'S UNDOUBTEDLY A DEMON!

I'M NOT SCARED BY YOUR PARLOR TRICKS, IF THINGS WERE DIFFERENT, I'D HAVE YOU BURNED AT THE STAKE!
BURN HIM, PAPA! HE'S THE DEMON DIVER!
MAKE HIM LEAVE! HE MADE BOSIE DISAPPEAR!
SOMEONE CALL THE SHERIFF! IT'S ABOUT TIME HE GOT INVOLVED WITH THIS!
CALLING UNIT 6641. THE FAULTY UNIT HAS BEEN REFURBISHED AND THE CIRCUITS ARE NOW GO. STAND CLEAR OF SURROUNDING ELEMENTS AND WE WILL RELOCATE YOUR COORDINATES!
WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE US? OR SOON YOU'LL BE BEHIND BARS ASKING FOR THE COURT'S MERCY!
IF YOU GET THAT FAR, YOU MIGHT HANG FIRST!
TONK!
FLOMP!

JOSE McREA '79

WE TOLD YOU NOT TO INTERFERE WITH THE LIFE ON THAT PLANET! NOW LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE! WE'RE STUCK WITH THEM! WE DIDN'T TAKE DOWN YOUR ORIGINAL COORDINATES!
I QUIT! GET YOURSELF A NEW PLANET SCOUT! THESE ALIENS GAVE ME ONE HELL OF A TIME!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH A BUNCH OF WEIRD ALIENS?

AFTER ALL WAS SAID AND DONE, THEY PLACED THE ALIENS IN A ZOO AND..
HEY! THEY ALL LEFT ME!
AND NONE OF THEM PAID FOR MY MEAL!
WELL ANYWAY, I'D BETTER GET GOING. JANE IS WAITING FOR ME AT THE ZOO
THE END—

2001 WORDS

An Interview with DOUGLAS TRUMBULL

It is a tragedy that the special effects of modern films [illegible] would be the same without Douglas Trumbull. His genius went to such films as 2001: A Space Odyssey, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, and Blade Runner [illegible] finest in bizarre celluloid vistas.

Trumbull brainstorming with Natalie Wood and Christopher Walken on the set of *Brainstorm*.

During the mid seventies, Trumbull invented a new film process labeled Showscan. By being shot at sixty frames per second (the usual movie is twenty-four fps) on 70mm film (whose increased area over the generally utilized 35mm permits the conveyance of greater visual information), and shown on huge screens accompanied by some of the most sophisticated sound reproduction possible, Showscan fosters an image said to be "absolutely realistic." Steven Spielberg has endorsed the process, while others have explained that, unlike watching a regular movie, Showscan is almost terrifyingly indiscernible from real life.

Developed in its embryonic stages under the auspices of Paramount Pictures, Showscan is presently being unveiled at four specially constructed theatres at the Brock Hotel Corporation's "ShowBiz Pizza Place" family amusement centers. Brock is an equal partner with Trumbull in Showscan. The first Showscan film, Big Ball, *concerns two rival businesses playing a soccer-like game using Honda Odyssey cars to ram a "big ball" into goals located at either end of a half-mile long beach. Trumbull selected the odd plot ("featuring tremendous high-speed action") to best display Showscan's experiential abilities ("You'll feel like you're in the game," the director claims.) and to relate "a sweet story about competition."*

By year's end, Trumbull hopes to have one hundred Showscan theatres, with as many as eight movies, ranging in length from twenty-two to forty-eight minutes, having been produced. As proud as he is of Showscan's technical achievement, he is equally pleased that he now has a ready-made venue in which to tell stories.

*Intriguingly, Trumbull has tried to emphasize that he perceives himself as an artist—despite the scientific largesse necessary to perform his accomplishments—*throughout *his career. Always desirous of being a "complete filmmaker," Trumbull directed two movies:* Silent Running *(1971) and* Brainstorm *(1983). Although both films suffered from erratic pacing, logic, and characterizations—indicating that Trumbull must mature as a director—they were laudable for attempting to explore philosophical issues. It was also ironic that two of the only recent sf productions to be more than glorified shoot-em-ups, emerged from someone normally perceived as a filmic technocrat. Hollywood recognizes him as one of their "few, genuine geniuses," but studios have generally failed to support his non-effects endeavors.*

Vowing at the time of Brainstorm's *premiere never to direct another Hollywood feature, Trumbull decided to devote himself to Showscan. His special effects company, however, will continue. At press time, the firm contracted for Peter Hyams's adaptation of* 2010: Odyssey Two, *Arthur C. Clarke's best-selling sequel to* 2001. *It would seem, then, that Trumbull's gone full circle, but his role will only be supervisory.*

One of Trumbull's assistants claims that the director has considered returning to effects actively "in about two years;" it is evident that his current enthusiasm is for Showscan, as perhaps well it should be.

—James H. Burns

They're here . . . *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

HM: Showscan has been your main passion for over seven years. What was the original attraction?

DT: Going back to when I was a kid, I was tremendously impressed by giant-screen "event movies," the kind that would be shown in Cinerama, Todd-AO and the like. My interest was further increased when I got to work with *2001*'s format, 70mm Super Panavision Cinerama. I became *fascinated* by the idea of not just trying to create a dramatic story for the screen, but a real experience for the audience as well. Ultimately, I wanted to find out what new could be done that would make an improvement in the way movies are made and presented.

HM: Showscan does seem to contain a danger of manipulation. Some people who have seen only the early Showscan tests have literally been afraid of its political implications.

DT: If Showscan is like a live performance and a live performance can be manipulative, then—yes, Showscan could manipulate people, too. But remember, even regular movies are manipulative. They use makeup and complex lighting techniques to make people look wonderful, and have everything editorially condensed in time. They manipulate the public by being a super-reality, a totally hyped illusion. We've just improved on that. My concerns with Showscan deal with the fact that the experience is very powerful. Through Showscan technology and visual effects, I can put people into my own imagination. Showscan is valid if we can show events that people cannot get in any other way. If Showscan becomes a replacement for the real thing, I wouldn't support it. Obviously, if the whole world stops going on camping trips and opts for totally simulated experiences, lives in celluloid boxes and eats only fast food, that would be more than bad. I mean, I don't ever want to hear anybody accuse Showscan of mind-fucking them. That'd wreck it, because Showscan's supposed to be fun. In fact, one of the wonderful things about the process is that it can get audiences really excited without resorting to bullet wounds and sex.

HM: We're not going to have any pornographic Showscan films?

DT: I wouldn't say that we weren't, but we don't have any immediate plans. (laughter) Certainly, everybody asks, "What's going to be the midnight show?"

HM: Once you know all this about Showscan, it almost makes *Brainstorm* seem like a commercial for it.

DT: That's not accidental! (laughter) *Brainstorm* was actually supposed to have been shot in Showscan, but I just wasn't able to pull that off within the confines of the movie industry. It's also, in a strange kind of way, very autobiographical.

HM: *Brainstorm*, thematically, is similar to *Silent Running* in that they both deal with a central character who, to varying levels, is isolated. The subject matter makes one wonder if, like Chris Walken in *Brainstorm*, you ever had a problem getting too caught up in your work?

DT: It's just the opposite. I have a very intense personal life and always have. I like to go to the forest, chop wood, go fishing, all kinds of things that have nothing to do with films. I have very few close friends who are even in the movie business. Regardless, everyone thinks of me as "Hollywood's special effects wizard," which I resent. My career has really been retarded by that view. It conjures up the stupid image that people insist on holding onto of the scientific character who is cold, wears thick glasses, and who can't have any long lasting relationships. While that stereotype may sometimes be true of scientists, it's certainly not always the case. I just liked the idea of telling people that I'm not like that by creating the kind of story that *Brainstorm* unfolds. This may not, however, have been the best time to do such an emotionally vulnerable film, because a lot of people are jaded and burnt out.

HM: One of the only problems audiences have with *Brainstorm* is they find it too vague.

DT: That was on purpose. I think that it's silly when movies try to sew up every little loose end—making it all black and white—because life isn't like that. I wanted to make a film that was completely mind-expanding—even in the areas that didn't deal with speculative fiction—giving you all sorts of things to wonder about *beyond* the framework of the movie. In a way, *Brainstorm* is not unlike *2001*, in that there are many story elements that people don't catch until the second time they see it. *Brainstorm*'s unusual structure—it's *quite* unlike the normal linear storyline development—really knocks some audiences off guard. The younger people, who have grown up on television and fast media, seem much more able to assimilate *Brainstorm* than those audiences who are not ready to watch it with a special kind of openness. Essentially, the film was a major effort on my part to integrate effects and a high-tech story with drama and performances. Now, the fact that *Altered States* and *War Games* came out before us means that *Brainstorm* isn't perhaps as fresh as it might have been if made when originally intended—four or five years ago, but I'm extremely proud of it.

HM: What's interesting about the way in which you've been typecast is that you didn't start out as a technical person.

DT: That's right. I majored in architecture at El Camino Junior College where, for the curriculum, I had to take a lot of art courses. I wound up becoming a pretty good illustrator, which helped me decide to drop out after the first year. I found work doing technically detailed product drawings for ad agencies, before finally ending up at Graphic Films. Over a three-year period at Graphic, though, I went from doing backgrounds for pretty sophisticated animated films about the space program to heading their animation department. Outside of a couple of college courses, my technical training was and is something that I've just absorbed with experience.

HM: Growing up, were you interested in science fiction?

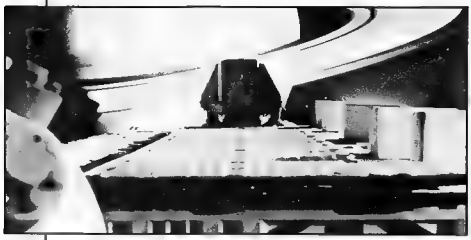
DT: I used to read Heinlein and some of the others, but I wasn't what you'd call a super-heavy science-fiction buff. Aside from Disney's stuff, I wasn't even really into fantasy movies. I fooled around with 8mm and animation photography when I was about twelve, but that wasn't really related to science fiction. I'd make home movies and do some trick stuff, like having someone climb into a barrel that got pushed over a cliff, cutting—of course—the person getting out of the barrel! To a certain degree, my early attitudes towards science fiction haven't changed.

HM: Then all of your work in the genre has really been because it lends itself best to effects work?

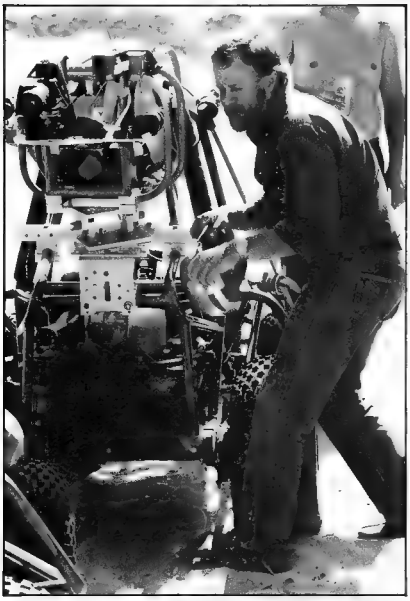
DT: I think it's more because of that than anything else. A lot of science fiction is either too frivolous or based on a cold gimmick of some kind. I'm much more interested in the real rather than the fanciful possibilities. *Star Wars*, for example, is a total fun/game movie that has nothing whatsoever to do with potential realities. As entertaining as it may be, it's extremely unsophisticated.

HM: Your first major science fiction effort was, of course, Arthur C. Clarke's and Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, when you were twenty-three.

DT: Kubrick found out about me when he saw *To the Moon and Beyond*, a 70mm short that Graphic Films made for the 1964 World's Fair. I had done most of the art for it. In fact, Stanley originally hired



Huey: so close, yet so far (*Silent Running*).



Trumbull with his "Showscan-mobile."

me simply as an illustrator who was familiar with animation. When I first arrived in England [where *2001* was shot], the pre-production was sort of a free-for-all. Stanley didn't even outline what I was to do for him, so I just began by doing various illustrations. After a period of acclimation—some of the designers had already been working for six months, although they were just beginning to tackle the visual effects—Stanley decided that I should try doing the animation for the HAL 9000 computer readouts. That eventually lead to my becoming involved with most facets of *2001*'s special effects—along with the three other supervisors, while being directly in charge of photographic continuity, animation, and a lot of the interrelationships of motion between the spacecraft, planets, and the like.

HM: How did a guy with absolutely no technical background obtain the special effects information that had to be in his head in order to help do *2001*?

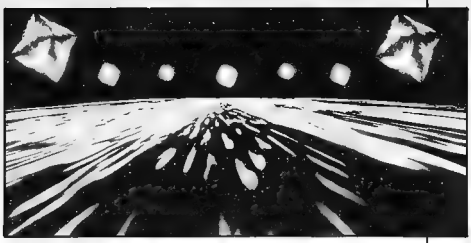
DT: It was a constant education process. Working with Kubrick was the best school in the world, not unlike being in a two and a half year college filmmaking program where I was given everything that I could possibly need. Stanley felt that since nothing like *2001* had ever been done before, the production process was not only new to me, but to everybody in the crew. There weren't any specialists in the field, so it was up to us to figure out how to do it. Stanley's approach was that we didn't have any particular deadline or budget to work within. He just wanted everyone to work to their best ability and do whatever they had to to get the job done. Those attitudes allowed for a lot of experimentation. If I said that I wanted to buy a different kind of a lens or build a photoelectric cell or something for a new concept, he'd answer, "Fine. Go do it. I trust you to do whatever you think is best." Under those circumstances, I was able to grow into the situation and learn about photography and effects at an incredibly rapid rate. I went from not even being able to call most cameras by their proper names to having the ability to invent the Slitscan [the device used to create *2001*'s famous ultimate trip sequence]. *2001* was the chance of a lifetime.

HM: When you returned to Los Angeles after *2001*, what made you decide to open your own effects facility? After the almost idyllic conditions you had just enjoyed, working on commercials must have been quite a change of pace, not to mention a possible letdown.

DT: The shop simply originated from my suddenly needing a job. I also wanted to work for myself and discover if there was a way for me to exploit and extend the knowledge that I had gained in England. *2001* certainly started me with a good reputation, which enabled me to gather a lot of commercial contracts—basically the only effects work available. I finally got to make *Silent Running* when Universal entered a phase of producing about five fairly low-budget films with the aim of giving the filmmaker almost total autonomy. It was a response to the success of *Easy Rider*, in the hope that they'd pop out a cult hit. My objective with *Silent Running* was to try to humanize a science-fiction movie so that space would no longer be viewed as a horrible, mechanistic environment. As beautiful as *2001* was, it was also a very cold, sort of inhuman picture. *The Andromeda Strain*, which I had also just finished working on, presented another depersonalized look at the future. *Silent Running* reacted against that. Production-wise, I was again very lucky in that Universal provided a terrific hands-off filmmaking experiment.

HM: How did you go all the way from *Silent Running* to *Showscan*?

DT: For about four years after *Silent Running*, I prepared a num-



"The ultimate trip . . . *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

ber of feature films that each fell apart for all the worse possible reasons: backers suddenly dying, executives killing a project at the last minute for no stated cause, regardless of its quality and commercial potential. It got to where I needed some money. If nothing else, I had some technical credibility, so I was able to talk Frank Yablans at Paramount into funding what, initially, was only a small research and development unit. While I thought that it would be really nice to attempt breaking some new ground, the Showscan tests were also the only way I could make a buck.

HM: But despite needing the money, you turned down *Star Wars* just a short while afterwards.

DT: I wasn't too eager to resume doing special effects for other people, even though it was my fallback income. I also didn't want to do another space opera. Working with miniatures against a star background is relatively easy, because they're not interacting with anything. On the other hand, Steven Spielberg—who asked me to work on *Close Encounters* just a few months later—presented the challenge of juxtaposing incredible effects against a totally realistic milieu. I had also been looking to get a lot of 70mm and other equipment, preferably with somebody else picking up the tab. By doing *Close Encounters* I was able to create a brand new effects shop. Thanks to that arrangement, and the other films that we've worked on, our company is now the best equipped 70mm facility in the world.

HM: Back to Showscan. Your first two sample films were made over five years ago. Why has Showscan taken so long to come to fruition?

DT: I couldn't get further backing, so I kept getting diverted to other projects: *Star Trek—The Motion Picture*, *Bladerunner*, and then *Brainstorm*. After Paramount converted a theatre to Showscan for me in Los Angeles around 1978—and later bowed out—I screened our tests for almost all the other major studios. Everybody loved it, but no one was prepared to take on Showscan's complex managerial problems. The studios would have had to get the exhibitors, people who won't even install Dolby systems without you're beating them up, to put $75,000 to $100,000 worth of equipment in each theatre. It's a Catch-22: the theatre owners won't invest in a new system unless all movies come that way, and no studio is going to fund a $10 to $20 million movie unless all the theatres have the capability to show it. Unfortunately, the distributors and exhibitors are two separate armed camps. Instead of pushing for improvements, the industry has carved up all the giant old theatres into multi-cinemas, which is a big self-destruct. In just a few years, they'll probably have to reconvert them back into single-screens. As people can get more and more films at home on large-screen, higher resolution TVs, the only reason they'll have to go out to a movie is to see a big spectacle in a suitable environment. In fact, spectacles already make up the bulk of what audiences are prepared to pay for. Something like 70% of the fifty all-time top grossing movies are special effects films: *Raiders, ET, James Bond, Gone with the Wind* . . . but the studios are blind to it.

HM: Does it strike you as ironic that to continue developing what could ultimately be a major boon to the movie industry, you've virtually had to invent your own industry?

DT: Everyone in Hollywood thinks it's hysterical that Doug Trumbull is off making "wierd films" for pizza parlors. But if you change the perspective a bit, you could say, "Why are movies shown at popcorn and Coke stands?" There's really no difference. I think it's fascinating that to find people with the visionary willingness to invest millions of dollars and believe in me, I had to go outside the movie business. The Brock Corporation isn't from Hollywood, but from Topeka, Kansas. They're honest, sincere, real people who understand what Showscan's trying to do and who have lent me their full emotional support. In no way am I surrounded by the skepticism and obfuscation that I experienced in Hollywood. It's wonderful. I'm not trying to entirely split from the movie industry as it exists, but in order to get the Showscan ball rolling, I've got to get theatres built, films produced, and demonstrate that the public will like it.

HM: The big question about Showscan's value, for other filmmakers, will be if it, aside from being suited to experiential films, actually improves basic storytelling abilities?

DT: Yes, simply by virtue of the fact that, again, it's more realistic. I mean, we're not eliminating any of the standard methods to create drama. You don't even have to make a Showscan film that has particularly experiential concepts. A perfectly standard story would still benefit from the process simply by being presented as a better quality product.

HM: We've talked about how adults might react to the process, but if Showscan does catch on, there's bound to be a school of thought saying that kids—growing up with Showscan and the other new technologies—might become overly dependent on those medias. Unlike people of my generation or yours, they won't have any other frame of reference.

DT: There's two sides to everything. Let's say there's some urban kid who's never been outside of Manhattan and I show him some amazing Showscan scene with camels in the desert. He might say to himself, because of the process being so realistic, "Wow! I had no idea it was so great." That excitement could lead him to learn more about whatever Showscan's presented to him. The form that I think is terrible in these types of terms is television. It's such a completely manipulated reality that it doesn't show anything realistically. Let's take ballet, for example, a very sensitive and delicate art form. If you went to a ballet and it was a terrific production, you might be very impressed, even if you were a tough ghetto kid. But if you were the same tough ghetto kid and you saw a ballet on TV, you might say, "What the shit is this? It looks like a bunch of fags dancing around. Ballet sucks." People decide against places and events based on the television version, which can only deliver about 1% of what those things really are. Showscan, at least, delivers the truth. Eventually, although there might not be much profit in it, I will cover artistic events and other areas that TV and films think are too commercially untenable. In the Showscan format, previously unsuccessful subjects might actually be popular, because it can give people such a new awareness of them.

HM: What would you like Showscan's potential to be? Do you see it replacing 35mm as the overall generic for movies?

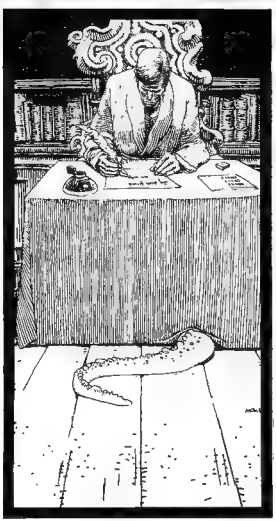
DT: No. Showscan will probably be like Cinerama in that it coexisted with the rest of the movie industry for quite sometime. I'd just like to see it evolve to where there's enough of a worldwide theatrical base to support substantial, full-blown theatrical filmmaking. It would be nice if guys like Spielberg and Coppola could, if they wanted to, easily make an experiential film. After all, I don't want to be the only guy making all the Showscan pictures. I'd love to go to these movies! (laughter)

HM: You mean, after seeing Showscan, we won't be spoiled into not being able to watch regular movies again?

DT: You might be. At least, that's the way I am. After working with or watching the process, it's pretty hard to ever settle for less.

LETTERING·BY·SHERI·NELSON·

CHAIN MAIL



Dear Metal Heavy:

As a former critic of your policy of printing "articles" in *Heavy Metal*, I have one thing to say: I'm sorry! *(Is that all you can say?—sm)* Although the articles' literary quality leaves much to be desired *(You should have quit while you were ahead.—sm)*, I'm beginning to see your point. The subject matter therein seems to be found nowhere else on Earth.

So I'd just like to say, keep up the good work, and reserve a place in your magazine for commentary. I thought you guys were a real bunch of Bozos before *(We thought you were, too.—sm)*, but now I've seen the light! Nothing else is like *Heavy Metal*, and you can take it from me.

Marc Paskvan
Calumet, MI

Punks:

Every time I come across your fascist magazine, I wonder what you are doing out of jail. *(We gave a free subscription to the governor.—sm)*

Your ideas are in no way different from those that caused Hitler to obtain power, even though you supposedly attack him with your ambiguous and actually highly cooperative strips. Futurism is a repulsive tendency which backs fascism; so it was when it first appeared and so it is now. Your goddamned metal and tubular future has absolutely no dignity *(but, unfortunately, plenty of wacko letters like yours.—sm)*.

Anonymous
Mexico

Sirs:

I was lucky and young enough to fully experience the comic book surge of the sixties. I amassed a semi-enviable collection through the rise of Spider-Man and the fall of Sgt. Rock. Letting it drop in the seventies, I moved on to *A Clockwork Orange*, *National Lampoon*, *Rollerball*, and *Monty Python*. Recently, however, this newest revival has sent me back to the rack. Therefore, I found Lou Stathis and Tom Sciacca's critiques to be especially insightful.

I, too, am shocked to see what Kirby and Ditko are letting see print, but I'll bet the original inks sell high at the conventions. I also find *American Flagg* beautifully drawn—perhaps even overdrawn. To me, *Judge*

Dredd stands head and shoulders above the new crowd. Brian Bolland has an incredible grasp of the medium, and the vision is a clear one.

I worry that the next burnout is already on the way as the shops fill with ex-Pac Men looking for a new fad to gobble and spit. Take heed, fandom rookies . . . when you see a comic book declaring itself a collector's item, it usually isn't. By the way, bravo to *Heavy Metal* for running "The Spirit," which you can never get enough of.

Michael Gallagher
Vero Beach, FL

Dear *Heavy Metal*:

I love your magazine, however it *is* very sexist, catering more to male enjoyment and entertainment. I demand equal satisfaction! I love sex. I get a strange enjoyment out of seeing little illustrated people getting it on.

Now, to my favorite. I salute Stefano Tamburini and Gaetano Liberatore for "Ranxerox"! Liberatore knows his anatomy. *However*, I feel cheated. As a woman, I'd love to see Ranx's beautiful body in the *total* nude more often. I was very upset when you pulled the stunt of deftly covering his tool with a word balloon. Naughty! Naughty! *(Ranxerox's penis is out of our hands!—sm)*

Come *on*! There are a lot more women readers of your magazine out there and I *know* they agree!

My husband reads *HM*—and he's the one who prompted me to write.

C. Sigmon,
Cleveland, OH

> "Is Ranxerox the hero? Does he really feel, or is he at the mercy of whomever turns his knob? Sounds like a real everyman to *me*."

Mr. Lou Stathis:

In reference to your article, "Nuvinyl: Avant-Guardian Angels," in the November '83 *Heavy Metal* . . . George Orwell would have wrapped his fish with it. *(And Lou probably lined his bird cage with* 1984. *—sm)*

Robert Westney
Burlington, VT

Gentlemen:

"Ranxerox," with its perfectly crafted tale of extreme lust and violence, exerts almost the same horrible fascination in me as a violent car wreck. *(Let us know if you ever start driving a cab.—sm)* The beautiful art coupled with an anarchic, post-urban-necromania story line, is a blend near impossible to tear one's eyes from. *(Unless there's a good wreck nearby. I suppose.—sm)*.

But I wonder what it says to me? A fleshy, well-hung (censorable) engine of destruction and rage, making drug deals and fucking twelve-year-olds (if you can fake bed sheets, you can damn well fake voice balloons). Is Ranx the hero? Does he really feel, or is he at the mercy of whomever turns his knob, so to speak? Sounds like a real everyman to *me*.

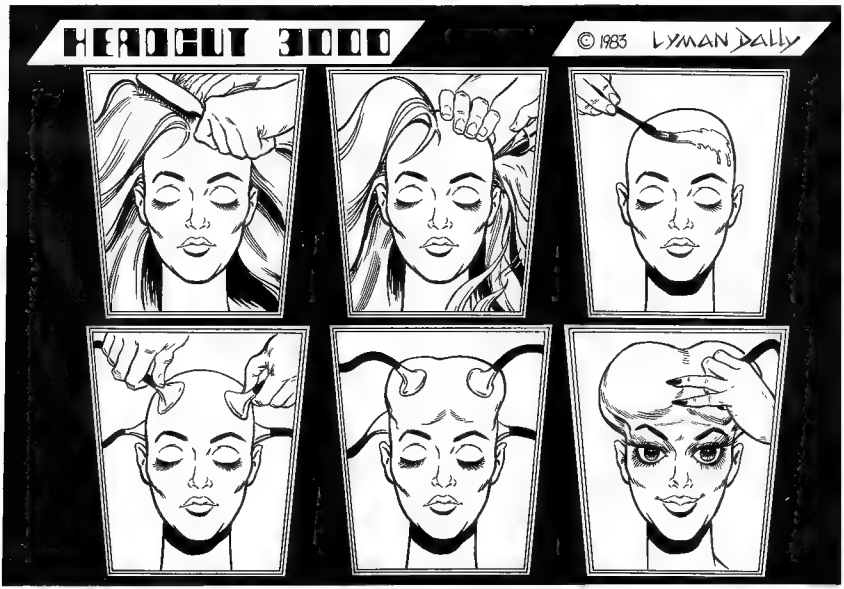
I'm not saying I like it or that I don't. It's not over yet. But reading "Ranxerox" really torques my bipolar psyche. I hope we can take it.

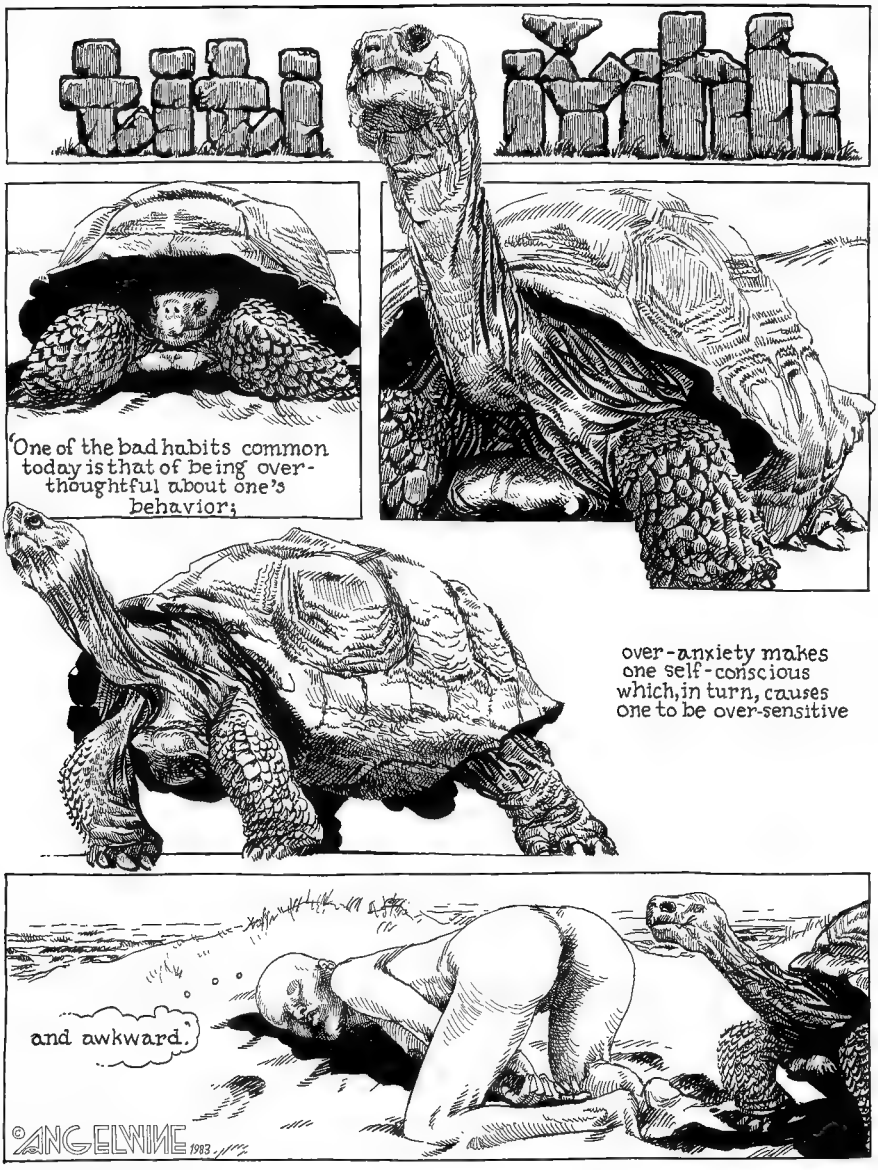
David DeHay
Austin, TX

Dear *HM*:

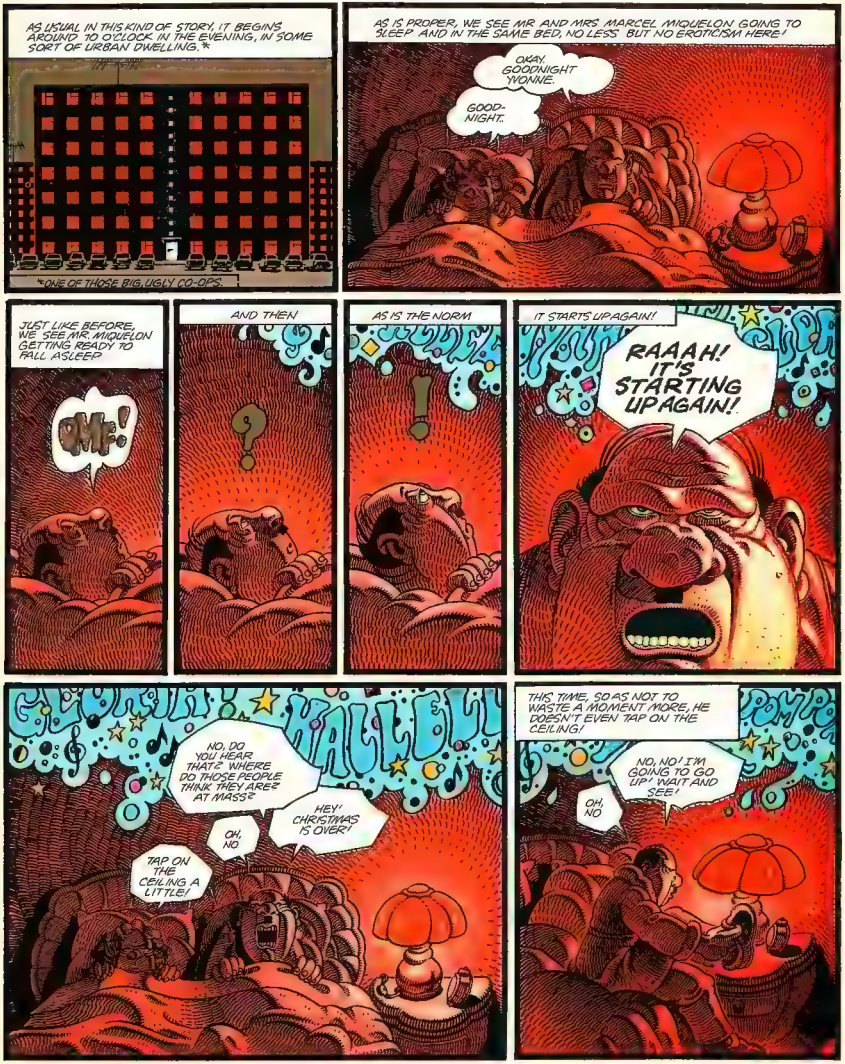
I think it's time to introduce one simple rule for your letters column. Anyone who wishes to make statements like: "Corben stinks," or "Kierkegaard is rubbish," or "The quality of your magazine has deteriorated," should be made to attach samples of their own work in this field. Otherwise their letter is to be incinerated. If any of these pumped nine-to-fivers knew what artists think of their uninformed opinions, they'd wilt and die of embarrassment. It takes years of work without reward, and a lot of talent to get where your much-knocked contributors are today. I'm sick of hearing the same old pseudo-plastic cliches from cop-outs who shelter in the offices of Life Insurance Companies and Employment Agencies.

K. Mailer
Honolulu, HI

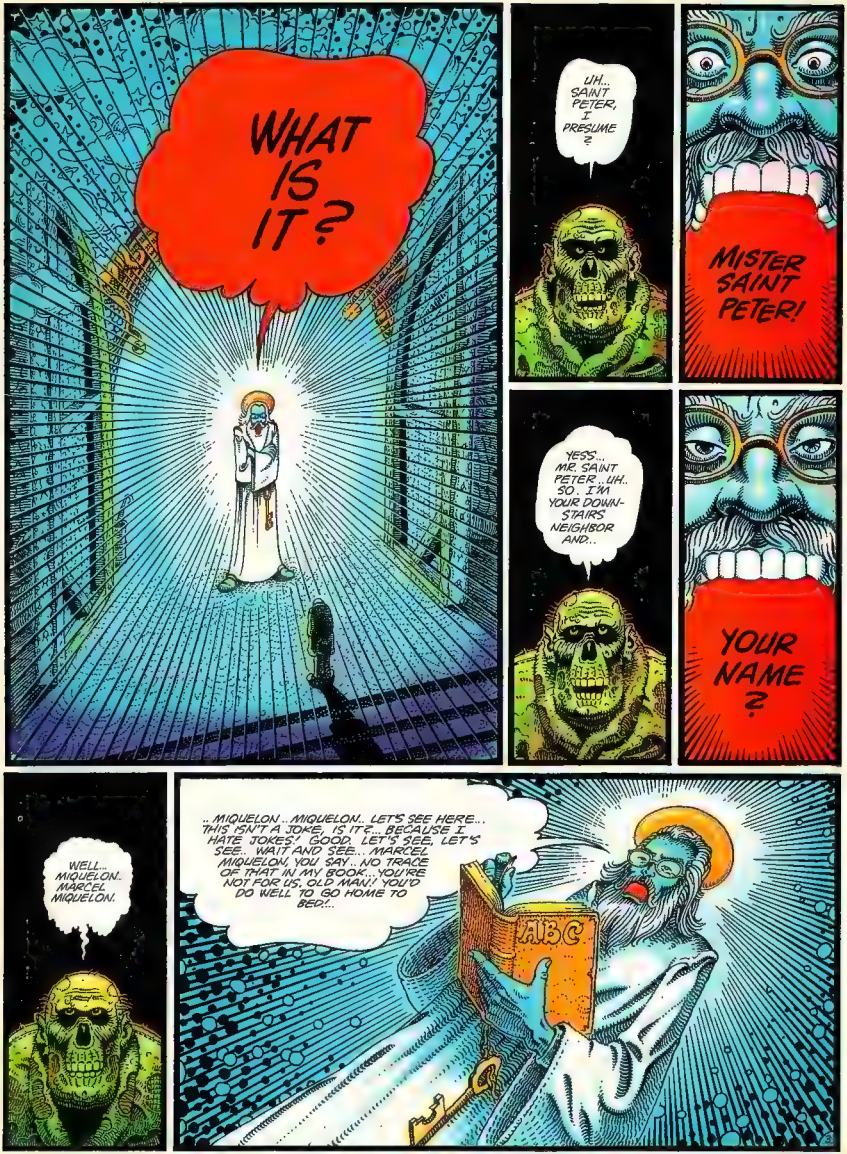


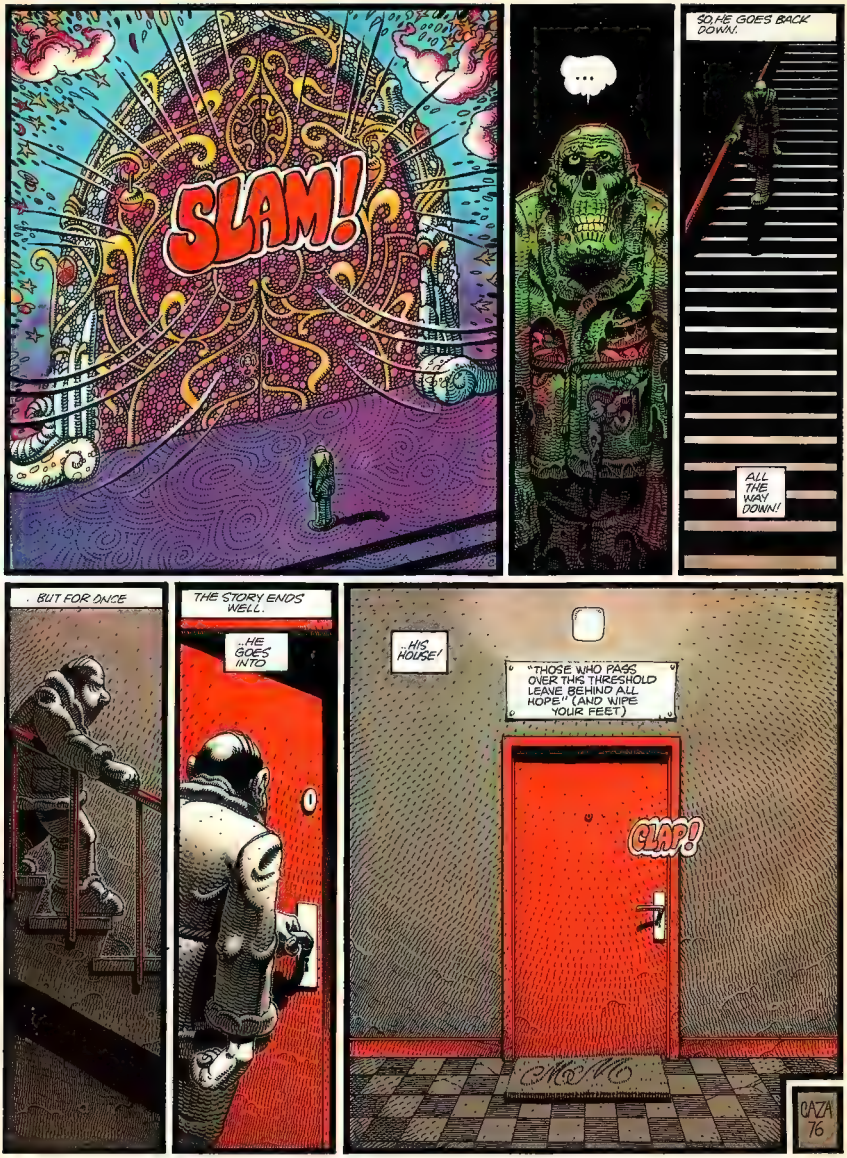

'One of the bad habits common today is that of being over-thoughtful about one's behavior;
over-anxiety makes one self-conscious which, in turn, causes one to be over-sensitive
and awkward.'
©ANGELWINE 1983

Noise From Upstairs


AS USUAL IN THIS KIND OF STORY, IT BEGINS AROUND 10 O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING, IN SOME SORT OF URBAN DWELLING.*
*ONE OF THOSE BIG, UGLY CO-OPS.
AS IS PROPER, WE SEE MR AND MRS MARCEL MIQUELON GOING TO SLEEP AND IN THE SAME BED, NO LESS BUT NO EROTICISM HERE!
OKAY, GOODNIGHT YVONNE.
GOOD-NIGHT.
JUST LIKE BEFORE, WE SEE MR MIQUELON GETTING READY TO FALL ASLEEP
ZZZ
AND THEN
?
AS IS THE NORM
!
IT STARTS UP AGAIN!
RAAAH! IT'S STARTING UP AGAIN!
NO, DO YOU HEAR THAT? WHERE DO THOSE PEOPLE THINK THEY ARE? AT MASS?
HEY! CHRISTMAS IS OVER!
OH, NO
TAP ON THE CEILING A LITTLE!
THIS TIME, SO AS NOT TO WASTE A MOMENT MORE, HE DOESN'T EVEN TAP ON THE CEILING!
NO, NO! I'M GOING TO GO UP! WAIT AND SEE!
OH, NO

AND ONCE AGAIN, AS USUAL, HE GOES UP!
HMMM I DIDN'T THINK
...THAT THE BUILDING
WAS SO HIGH!
BUT ON THIS PARTICULAR EVENING, HE GOES UP VERY HIGH! MUCH HIGHER THAN USUAL! MUCH MUCH HIGHER, IN FACT! SO MUCH HIGHER THAT WHEN HE GETS TO THE HIGHEST LANDING.
THE FINAL SUMMIT!
HE IS INCREDIBLY HIGH!
Allez Bouillabaisse
POM POM POM
GLORIA!
YOUPI-YOUPI
Service Entrance
TWENTY TWO!
Night bell


WHAT IS IT?
UH... SAINT PETER, I PRESUME?
MISTER SAINT PETER!
YESS.. MR. SAINT PETER.. UH. SO.. I'M YOUR DOWN-STAIRS NEIGHBOR AND..
YOUR NAME?
WELL.. MIQUELON. MARCEL MIQUELON.
.. MIQUELON.. MIQUELON.. LET'S SEE HERE... THIS ISN'T A JOKE, IS IT?... BECAUSE I HATE JOKES! GOOD. LET'S SEE, LET'S SEE.. WAIT AND SEE.. MARCEL MIQUELON, YOU SAY.. NO TRACE OF THAT IN MY BOOK.. YOU'RE NOT FOR US, OLD MAN! YOU'D DO WELL TO GO HOME TO BED!..
ABC


SLAM!
...
SO, HE GOES BACK DOWN.
ALL THE WAY DOWN!
. BUT FOR ONCE
THE STORY ENDS WELL.
. HE GOES INTO
. HIS HOUSE!
"THOSE WHO PASS OVER THIS THRESHOLD LEAVE BEHIND ALL HOPE" (AND WIPE YOUR FEET)
CLAP!
CAZA 76

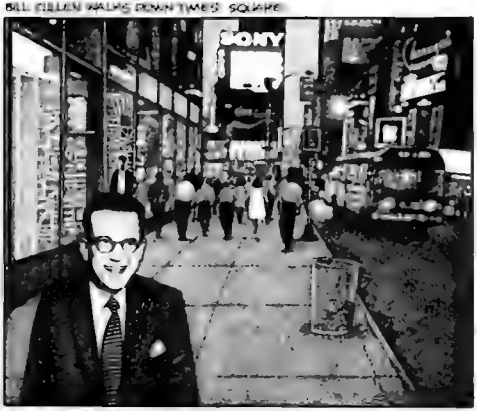
HM's STAR DISSECTIONS

©1984 DREW FRIEDMAN

GAME SHOW HOSTS WALK AMONG US!

JACK NARZ WALKS THE STREETS OF DETROIT.

BILL KILLEN WALKS DOWN TIMES SQUARE



BOB EUBANKS WALKS IN MADISON, WISCONSIN

WINK MARTINDALE WALKS THROUGH THE SLUMS OF HARLEM.

BOB BARKER WALKS THROUGH GOLF COURSE

APPLAUSE

PRESENTING...TWO CUTE LITTLE EXTRATERRESTRIAL CREATURES TALKING ABOUT...

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
AH, BUT IT'S TRUE, MY DEAR!
WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING THE UNIVERSE FOR GREAT BACK ISSUES OF HEAVY METAL AND...
AND...
...AND NOW WE FIND THAT WE CAN GET THEM DIRECT FROM HM.
WOW! RARE EARLY ISSUES OF HM! WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE BETTER?
JOE CORRIGAN
FUTURE ISSUES?

#1/APRIL '77: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#2/MAY '77: Russian astronauts, "Conquering Armies," the ultimate rock festival, and more.

#3/JUNE '77: Macedo's "Rockblitz," highly praised "Shells," beginning of Davis's "World Apart," Moebius, Corben, Bodé, more.

#4/JULY '77: Lots of Moebius: "Arzach," "The Long Tomorrow"; conclusion of "Sunpot."

#5/AUGUST '77: "Polonius" begins, "The Long Tomorrow" concludes, and "World Apart" and "Den" continue.

#6/SEPTEMBER '77: Roger Zelazny has a short story, and Moebius, a space opera; plus more "World Apart," "Den," and "Polonius."

#7/OCTOBER '77: Fiction by Theodore Sturgeon, Moebius's "Airtight Garage," "Den" and "Polonius" back again.

#8/NOVEMBER '77: New Harlan Ellison fiction, 9 color pages by Moebius and Rimbaud, conclusions for "Polonius" and "World Apart."

#9/DECEMBER '77: Extra pages for the complete "Vuzz," by Druillet, "Fortune's Fool," by Chaykin and Wein, plus full-color Corben, Macedo, Claveloux, and Moebius.

#10/JANUARY '78: Morrow illustrates Zelazny, Lob and Pichard update *Ulysses*, "Conquering Armies" concludes, "Den" continues.

#11/FEBRUARY '78: New adventures of "Barbarella," cover and center spread by Nino, plus Moebius and Corben.

#12/MARCH '78: Gray Morrow's swashbuckling "Orion" debuts; more "Barbarella," "Urm," and "Den."

#13/APRIL '78: Our 1st anniversary issue! A 30-page insert from "Paradise 9." "Barbarella" gives birth, while "Den" wraps it up.

#14/MAY '78: "Urm the Mad" waves bye-bye, but "Orion" and "Barbarella" continue, and Alex Nino tips his hat.

#15/JUNE '78: Corben introduces Shahrazad. Sturgeon's classic "More Than Human" is illustrated, more "Barbarella," and the origins of "Heilman."

#16/JULY '78: A happy ending for "Barbarella," a sad ending for "1996," resumption of Druillet's "Gail," more "Heilman," "Orion," "More Than Human," and Corben's "Arabian Nights."

#17/AUGUST '78: SORRY — SOLD OUT!

#18/SEPTEMBER '78: SORRY — SOLD OUT!

#19/OCTOBER '78: "Exterminator 17," Ellison's illustrated "Glass Goblin," debut of McKie's "So Beautiful and So Dangerous."

#20/NOVEMBER '78: Twenty pages of the Delany/Chaykin "Empire," more "Sindbad," "Exterminator," Major Grubert, "Heilman."

#21/DECEMBER '78: The stocking's full with "Orion," Kirchner's "Tarot," and 12 beautiful pages of Moebius.

#22/JANUARY '79: Trina debuts and Druillet concludes "Gail," plus McKie and Corben.

#23/FEBRUARY '79: "Galactic Geographic," "Starcrown," Corben's "Sindbad," McKie's "So Beautiful and So Dangerous," plus Moebius, Bilal, and Macedo.

#24/MARCH '79: Twenty pages of Chaykin illustrating Bester's "The Stars My Destination," "Starcrown" II, and Ellison's late show.

#25/APRIL '79: SORRY — SOLD OUT!

#26/MAY '79: It's all-American (except for Druillet's "Dancin'" and a Proust joke): 15 entries including Corben, Morrow, the illustrated "Alien."

#27/JUNE 79: SORRY — SOLD OUT!

#28/JULY '79: Bodé's "Zooks" premieres, Corben's "Sindbad" concludes. Morrow and Moebius continue, Mike Hinge debuts.

#29/AUGUST '79: Caza steals show with "New Ark City," plus Mayerik, Suydam, "Galactic Geographic," Bodé, more

#30/SEPTEMBER '79: "Elric," "Buck Rogers," a lizard named "Elvis," and "Little Red V-3," alongside Montellier and Moebius.

#31/OCTOBER '79: A Halloween tribute to H. P. Lovecraft, with Moebius, Breccia, Druillet, Suydam.

#32/NOVEMBER '79: Corben's "Rowlf," Bodé's "Zooks," Brunner's "Elric," Chaykin's "The Stars My Destination," Moebius, and more.

#33/DECEMBER '79: A Christmas package from Caza, Corben, Kofoed, Suydam, Stiles, Trina, Moebius, and Ellison, plus "Gnomes" and "Giants."

#34/JANUARY '80: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#35/FEBRUARY '80: An eerie Couratin cover adorns this issue. Corben's "The Beast of Wolfton" begins, McKie experiments with the Air Pump, and we join Matt Howarth on a crazed acid trip.

#36/MARCH '80: Why did "The Crevasse" take Jeannette? Read the Schuiten strip! Plus: Corben, Matena, Moebius, and Lee Marrs.

#37/APRIL '80: Our 3rd anniversary issue — 32 pages of "Champakou" in living color, final installment of Moebius's "Airtight Garage," plus Caza, Bilal, Howarth, Corben, Bodé — and more!

#38/MAY '80: Does the Supreme Alchemist exist? Will Axle ever find out? Will "Champakou" reach the Doll of Jade? Will Joe strike out with the alien Marilyn, too?

#39/JUNE '80: "Champakou" meets his fate, while "Captain Sternn" saves the day. And it's the Flying Wallendas vs. Earth!

#40/JULY '80: "The Alchemist Supreme" continues; Axle learns truth about sidekick Musky. Bilal's "Progress!" begins, and Moebius returns with "Shore Leave."

#41/AUGUST '80: Druillet returns with "Salammbo" while Moebius concludes "Shore Leave" (and is interviewed). Bilal continues "Progress!"

#42/SEPTEMBER '80: "The Alchemist Supreme" concludes while Bilal's "Progress!" picks up steam. Ernie Colon, Paul Kirchner, Leo Duranona contribute nifty shorts, while "Rock Opera" gets stranger.

#43/OCTOBER '80: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#44/NOVEMBER '80: Cover by Hajime Sorayama. Claveloux, Moebius, Kaluta, Springett, and Bilal inside.

#45/DECEMBER '80: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#46/JANUARY '81: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#47/FEBRUARY '81: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#48/MARCH '81: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#49/APRIL '81: Corben's "Bloodstar," Giménez's "Good-bye, Soldier," Harry North's "Stories from London," and an interview with Julio Ribera.

#50/MAY '81: Premiers of Chaykin's "Cody Starbuck" and Bilal's "The Immortals' Fête!" Plus: Suydam's "The Toll Bridge" and William S. Burroughs on immortality.

#51/JUNE '81: The 1st part of the Richard Corben interview, Jim Steranko's adaptation of *Outland* premieres, Howarth's "Changes" winds up. Plus: Caza, Chaykin, Crepax.

#52/JULY '81: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#53/AUGUST '81: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#54/SEPTEMBER '81: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#55/OCTOBER '81: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#56/NOVEMBER '81: Jeronaton's "Egg of the World," Jeff Jones, Segrelles, and Bilal all frame the art of Leo and Diane Dillon beautifully.

#57/DECEMBER '81: SORRY—SOLD OUT!

#58/JANUARY '82: Our "Happy Future" issue. Includes Arno, Loustal, Voss, Hé, and Gillon, and "The Autonomous Man," all surrounded by Chaykin and Simonson, Segrelles, and Steranko

#59/FEBRUARY '82: The further adventures of John Difool in "The Incal Light." Wein and Chaykin's "Gideon Faust" gets going—again. Plus Fernandez, Jones, Schuiten.

#60/MARCH '82: 2nd Special Rock Issue featuring Dick Matena's "A Life in the Day," a surrealistic look at the life of John Lennon. Luis Garcia's "Nova 2" begins. Plus "Mercenary," "Den," "Rock Opera," etc

#61/APRIL '82: 5th anniversary issue offers a variety of material. What with Claveloux, Druillet, Moebius, Bilal, and an essay on J.G. Ballard, you'll be busy until our 6th!

#62/MAY '82: The 1st part of David Black's "Third Sexual Revolution." "The Art of De Es Schwertberger." Plus: "Sixteen and Vanilla" by Ted White and Val Lakey.

#63/JUNE '82: Fantastic Cities issue, with artists Voss, Caza, Scibelli, and R. Crumb, all surrounded by regulars: Druillet, Moebius, Schuiten, and Fernandez.

#64/JULY '82: Marcele and Lacome's strange "Life at the Circus" and pages from Corben's *Flights into Fantasy*. Plus Jones, Garcia, and Druillet.

#65/AUGUST '82: Jones and Wrightson's "Freak Show" and Pisu and Manara's "The Ape." Plus the finale of "The Incal Light" by Moebius and Jodorowsky.

#66/SEPTEMBER '82: Hecht's "Music-Video Interface," Lupoff's "Barsoom!" and Hinge's "Object." Plus our regulars: Bilal, Fernandez, Kierkegaard.

#67/OCTOBER '82: You'll have Scary Dreams after reading our special horror section. Everything from Eddie Poe to the weirdest phobias possible. Don't read it alone! P.S. Last part of Black's "Third Sexual Revolution."

#68/NOVEMBER '82: Part 1 of Kaluta's "Starstruck." Findley's "Tex Arcana" continues as does "Den II" and Druillet's "Yragael." Plus: a peek at Wrightson's *National Lampoon's Class Reunion*.

#69/DECEMBER '82: A Will Stone Gallery, the return of Suydam's "Mudwog," and Mark Fisher's "Amino Men." Plus Corben, Fernandez, and Kierkegaard.

#70/JANUARY '83: The strange conclusion to Wrightson's "Freak Show," a look at *The Dark Crystal*, and regulars Manara, Corben, Fernandez, etc.

#71/FEBRUARY '83: The making of the film *The Entity*, Kim Deitch's *Eating Raoul*, and regulars Corben, Kaluta, Crepax, etc.

#72/MARCH '83: We bid a fond farewell to Den and Kath, and a warm welcome to Bilal's "City that Didn't Exist." A Gallery on Robert Williams, plus Manara, Kaluta and more.

#73/APRIL '83: Moebius's "The Twinkle in Fildegar's Eye," and Sauri's "The Odyssey," along with Kaluta, Crepax, and Workman.

#74/MAY '83: Kaluta and Lee's stagestruck "Starstruck," "Marlowskitz" the robotic detective, and the conclusion of Manara and Pisu's "The Ape."

#75/JUNE '83: Corben's "Doomsculpt," the end of Crepax's "The Man from Harlem," and a peek at the 3-D science fiction thriller, *Spacehunter*.

#76/JULY '83: Liberatore's "Ranxerox," the end of Kaluta's "Starstruck" (for the time being), an interview with Dan O'Bannon and a glimpse at Ray Bradbury's *Dinosaur Tales*.

#77/AUGUST '83: Arno and Jodorowsky's "The Small Earthworm" debuts, Giménez's "A Matter of Time" appears, and Captain Beefheart is interviewed, all behind a beautiful Greg Hildebrandt cover

#78/SEPTEMBER '83: An exclusive interview with Francis Ford Coppola! Plus a Gallery look at the art of Rowena Morrill and the conclusions of "Zora" and "The City that Didn't Exist."

#79/OCTOBER '83: Timothy Leary! Enki Bilal! Pepe Moreno! Walter Hill! Rocky and Bullwinkle!?! A great issue!

#80/NOVEMBER '83: A spirited talk with Will Eisner, along with a Spirit story. Plus Crepax's "Valentina the Pirate." Enjoy

#81/DECEMBER '83: Ranxerox bows out. Valentina comes on strong. Artist Liberatore is interviewed. Lots more!

#82/JANUARY '84: Part one of David Black's vampire memoirs. Plus "Ranxerox in New York", and a peek at Arthur Clarke's *The Sentinel*.

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Synopsis:After Pixelle's impetuousness caused us to be swallowed by an enormous dragon--
ROCK OPERA
It could be worse--at least we've got each other!
But once we'd taken off our clothes--
--I was in for another,more horrifying shock...
Hey!Where are your nipples?And your,um, private parts?
Why don't you stop worrying and come to bed?
Yeah,you're right.I've just been thinking about myself.

I don't know what you're talking about.
SEX!That's what!Look,how do you Pixies make little baby Pixies,anyway?
We don't make them--we find them under mushrooms,you big dope.Doesn't everybody?
Ahem!
Oh,for Christ's sake!
Am I interrupting something--I hope?
What are you doing here?
I live here.Allow me to introduce myself--I'm the Doctor.
Doctor who?

Who cares?
Do you perform sex-change surgery, by any chance?
No, I'm afraid I'm not that sort of doctor. I used to be a television personality on a minor sort of planet--until I got fed up.
But why?
Why not? You see, I simply couldn't face the same flippant dialogue and rubber monsters every week, so I stole a ship--the "Retardis"--from the set, and here I am!
Living in blissful solitude--until you two showed up.
Look, hang on! Why don't we exchange clothing, and then you can go back and say that you're me?
Don't you think they'll notice the difference?
Oh, just say you've been a bit ill.
Well, the coat does fit...
...Where'd you say you parked this "Retardis"?

Just turn left and follow the intestines--you can't miss it.
Come on,let's go!
Where are we going?
To find his space-ship.I'm going to be a TV star!
Oh no!
It's OK--it won't change me.And I'll make sure a part is written for you--
No--LOOK!
I turned to find that we were being menaced by a malevolent blob,which advanced upon us, gobbling up bits of protein as it came...
Gross me out! What is it?
It's a huge enzyme! It's trying to digest us!
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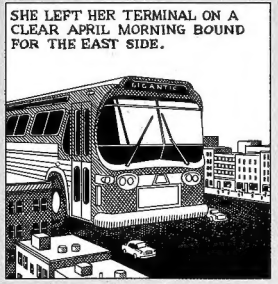

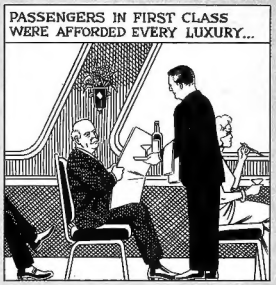

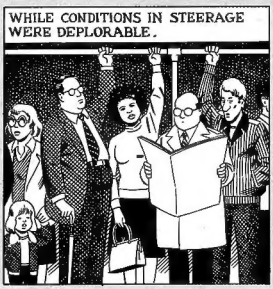

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